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U.S. vs. Human Rights In the Third World

NOAM CHOMSKY & EDWARD S. HERMAN

The New International Economic Order

SAMIR AMIN

Revolution in Ethiopia

AN OBSERVER

Exit Mrs. Gandhi

RUTH GLASS

Special 96-page issue

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NOTES FROM THE EDITORS

The double summer issue of MR is normally devoted to one central topic, but this year a project of this kind failed to materialize on schedule. So we are offering instead an oversize issue featuring four articles each considerably longer than a "standard" MR article (about 5,000 words). These deal with (1) the "New International Economic Order" (Samir Amin), (2) the significance of Carter's crusade for human rights (Noam Chomsky and Edward S. Herman), (3) the fall of Mrs. Gandhi in India (Ruth Glass), and (4) the profound revolutionary process under way in Ethiopia (an observer who must remain anonymous). Of the four, the article by Samir Amin has been accorded the "Review of the Month" position, first, because it is more theoretical than the others and bears directly or indirectly on all the great questions of development and underdevelopment which lie at the center of the history of our time, and second, because it clearly articulates a theoretical position with which we are in full agreement.

As was noted in this space in the June issue, both editors were in Spain in May participating in an international symposium on imperialism at the University of Barcelona which was timed to coincide with the inauguration in Barcelona of a new Spanish-language edition of MR (entitled *Revista Mensual/Monthly Review*). RM/MR takes the place of *Monthly Review: Selecciones en Castellano* which began publication in Buenos Aires in 1963 and later moved, first to Santiago de Chile and then

 (*Continued on inside back cover*)

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SELF-RELIANCE AND THE NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER

By Samir Amin

The decades following the Second World War were marked by the rise of the liberation movement on three continents, the main goals of which, in Asia and in Africa, were the reconquest of national independence and its defense by refusing the military alliances through which the United States sought to dominate the policy of the Third World states. But in general, the goals and methods of economic development pursued did not challenge the main features of the international division of labor shaped during the last century. Hence an externally oriented and dependent development model was usually accepted. The objective failure of this model and the increasingly difficult problems gradually induced the Third World countries to embark upon a new strategy with the aim of consolidating their reconquered political independence by strengthening their economic independence.

The new development strategy is asserted in three complementary aspects: (1) the choice of a "self-reliant" development based on the principle of depending on one's own resources; (2) the priority given to cooperation and economic integration between the countries of the Third World ("collective self-reliance"); and (3) the demand for a new international economic order based on higher prices for raw materials and the control

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of natural resources, access by the manufactures of the Third World to the markets of the developed countries, and the acceleration of the transfer of technologies.

It is easy to understand that such general slogans—even if they are sound—lend themselves to different interpretations. Apart from commonplace demagogic attempts by local circles, which cannot envisage development as other than dependent, to take up the slogans, and apart from their verbal and opportunistic acceptance by certain of the external forces which are in practice hostile to the goals of the new international economic order, some serious divergences remain both as to the ultimate goals and as to the means of a self-reliant development within the context of an effective attempt to impose a new world order.

Actually, the real issue is whether the alternatives can be defined as we have just done, i.e., irrespective of ultimate goals, the choice between socialism and capitalism. In other words, is the goal of *autonomous* capitalist development in the Third World countries realistic? For the developed capitalist economies are indeed self-reliant, although not economically self-sufficient. In this case, it makes sense to speak of interdependence—even among unequals (for French capitalism is not the equal of German or American capitalism). But the peripheral capitalist economies have so far been externally oriented and dependent, not "interdependent." Could they become "self-reliant" without withdrawing from the world system of exchange of commodities, technologies, and capital? Could they do it by forcing the world system to readjust, by imposing an equal, and no longer unequal, division of labor? Could they attain this goal by means which define the program of the new international economic order? These issues cannot be evaded.

To sum up, does this recent evolution of the Third World call into question our theory of peripheral capitalism? I would recall that this theory asserts that there is a fundamental difference between the model of self-reliant accumulation and the model that describes the peripheral capitalist system, thus rejecting any linear theory of "stages" of development. It excludes the prospect of a mature, autonomous capitalism in the periphery. It asserts that a socialist break with this system is

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here objectively necessary. Thus, in this very precise sense, it claims that the national liberation movement constitutes a period in the socialist transformation of the world and not a stage of the development of capitalism on the world scale. This is a permanent question, but one which arises continually in new terms. And it is these new terms that we propose to consider in this article.

II

The determining interrelation in a self-reliant capitalist system is that which links the sector producing mass consumption goods with the sector producing capital goods. This determining interrelation has been the characteristic feature of the historical development of capitalism in the center of the system (in Europe, North America, and Japan). Thus, it provides an abstract definition of the "pure" capitalist mode of production and was analyzed as such in Marx's *Capital*. Marx, in fact, showed that in the capitalist mode of production, there is an *objective* (i.e., *necessary*) relation between the rate of surplus value and the level of development of the productive forces. The rate of surplus value is the main determinant of the pattern of social distribution of the national income (its distribution between wages and profit), and hence that of demand (wages being the main source of demand for mass consumption goods and profits being wholly or partly "saved" for "investment" purposes). The level of development of the productive forces is expressed through the social division of labor—the allocation of the labor force, in suitable proportions, to each of the two sectors.

Despite the schematic nature of this model, it nevertheless describes the core of the system. External relations are left out of the model, meaning not that the development of capitalism takes place within a framework of national autarky (economic self-sufficiency) but that the main relations within the system can be understood without including such relations. More precisely, external relations are subject to the logic and the requirements of self-reliant internal accumulation. Furthermore, the model clearly brings out the historically *relative* nature of the distinction between mass consumption goods and

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luxury goods. In the strict sense of the term, "luxury" goods are those for which the demand originates from that part of profit which is consumed, whereas the demand which stems from wages increases with the progress of the productive forces. However, the historical sequence in the types of "mass-consumption" goods is of decisive importance for an understanding of the problem in hand. The structure of demand in the early history of the system speeded the agricultural revolution by providing a *domestic market* for food products. Hence, agrarian capitalism came before the expansion and maturity of the capitalist mode in industry.

So, from the lessons of this model, we may derive three important conclusions:

(1) The emergence of the capitalist mode of production in the regions which were to become the centers of the world capitalist system stemmed from an internal process of breaking-up the pre-capitalist (here, feudal) modes. This breaking-up of the feudal relations of production in the European rural world constitutes the social framework conducive to the famous "agricultural revolution" which precedes—and makes possible—the subsequent "industrial revolution." The prior increase of productivity in agriculture makes it possible to drive out of the rural world a "surplus" (proletarianized) population and simultaneously gives rise to a surplus of marketed foodstuffs necessary for the reproduction of this proletariat.

(2) The interrelation in time and space of class alliances which enable new capitalist relations to flourish in industry, while it takes various forms, always expresses the same principal condition: the alliance between the new dominant class (the industrial bourgeoisie) and the landowners (either peasants—after a French-type revolution—or latifundists when the former feudal landowners are transformed and integrated into the market, as in England or Germany) in the context of a mature and powerful national state.

(3) Thus the subjection of external relations (economic and political) to the requirements of internal accumulation gradually shapes the world capitalist system. The latter emerges as a series of central formations, self-reliant and interdependent (even if they are unequally advanced), and of peripheral forma-

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tions subjected to the logic of accumulation in the centers that dominate them.

So we conclude that, although the vision of a development by "stages" (with some simply lagging historically behind others) is roughly valid as regards the gradual constitution of the centers, it is not valid as regards the peripheries.

It is precisely this conclusion which is the real object of the explicit or implicit divergences in all the debates about the future of the Third World. Hence we must now consider the stages in the formation and evolution of the peripheries, and the likely prospects in front of them. For the opposite view maintains (explicitly or implicitly) that, despite their externally propelled origin, the underdeveloped economies are progressing through the specific stages of their evolution towards the constitution of mature self-reliant economies. These could be either "capitalist" or "socialist" for reasons related to a sphere which lies outside the one which defines our analytical method.

III

Let us now consider the stages in the evolution of the peripheries of the world capitalist system, at least since the middle of the last century. This model of accumulation at the periphery of the world system begins, under an impetus from the center, with the creation of an export sector in the periphery which will play the determining role in the creation and shaping of the market. The underlying *reason* which rendered possible the creation of this export sector must be sought in the conditions which make its establishment "profitable." There is no pressure for central national capital to emigrate because of *insufficient possible outlets at the center; but it will emigrate* to the periphery if it can obtain a better return there. The equalization of the rate of profit will redistribute the advantages of this higher return and use the export of capital as a means to fight the trend of a falling profit rate. The *reason* for creating a peripheral export sector therefore lies in obtaining, from the periphery, products which are constituents of constant capital (raw materials) or of variable capital (food products) at production costs lower than those at the center for similar

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products (or for substitutes in the case of specific products).

This is therefore the framework for the *essential* theory of *unequal exchange*. The products exported by the periphery are important to the extent that the difference between the returns to labor is greater than the difference between the productivities. And this can be so because the peripheral society will by every means—economic and noneconomic—be made subject to this new function of providing relatively cheap labor to the export sector.

Here, then, the main link which characterizes the process of capital accumulation at the center—expressed by the objective relation between wage rate and the level of development of the productive forces—disappears completely. The wage rate in the peripheral export sector will, in this case, be as low as the economic, social, and *political* conditions allow it to be. As regards the level of development of the productive forces, it will be heterogeneous (whereas in the self-reliant model, it was homogeneous), advanced (and sometimes very advanced) in the export sector, and backward in "the rest of the economy." This backwardness (maintained by the system) is the condition which allows the export sector to benefit from cheap labor.

Under these conditions, the domestic market generated by the development of the export sector, will be limited and distorted. The smallness of the internal market explains the fact that the periphery attracts only a limited amount of capital from the center although it offers a better return. The contradiction between the consumption and production capacities is overcome at the level of the world system as a whole (center and periphery) by a widening of the market at the center, the periphery—fully deserving its name—merely fulfilling a subordinate and limited function. This dynamic leads to an increasing polarization of wealth toward the center.

Once the export sector has expanded to a certain size, however, a domestic market emerges. As compared with the market generated in the central process, it is (relatively) biased against the demand for "mass"-consumption goods and in favor of the demand for "luxury" goods. If all the capital invested in the export sector were foreign, and if all the returns to this capital were re-exported to the center, the domestic

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market would, in fact, be confined to a demand for mass-consumption goods; and the lower the wage rate, the smaller the demand would be. But a part of this capital is locally owned. In addition, the methods used to ensure a low return to labor are based on the strengthening of the various local social classes which serve as conveyor belts: latifundists in some places, kulaks in others, comprador commercial bourgeoisie, state bureaucracy, etc. The domestic market will thus be *mainly* based on the demand for "luxury goods" from these social strata.

This scheme actually corresponds to the historical reality of the *first phase of the imperialist system*. No doubt this phase had its golden age between 1880 and 1914; but it started earlier for Latin America, and it has sometimes lasted much longer (up to the 1950s) elsewhere, such as in tropical Africa. It is the age of the "colonial pact," the colonial and semi-colonial form of domination exerted over the periphery.

As opposed to the central model, this has three qualitatively different features:

(1) Here the capitalist model is "introduced from outside," by political domination. There is no breaking-up of pre-capitalist rural relations, but rather (this is quite different) a distortion of them because they are subjected to the laws of accumulation of the central capitalist mode which dominates them. This is shown in the absence of a prior "agricultural revolution," i.e., the stagnation of productivity in agriculture.

(2) The class alliances which provide the political framework for the reproduction of the system are not principally internal class alliances, but an international alliance between the capital of the dominant monopolies and its (subordinate) "allies," to use an all-embracing term: the "feudal lords" (meaning the varied range of dominant classes in the pre-capitalist rural systems) and the "comprador bourgeoisie." There is no really mature independent national state serving these local classes, but only administrations serving monopoly capital, directly (colonial case) or indirectly (semi-colonial case).

(3) In this case external relations are not subject to the logic of an internal development, but on the contrary are the driving force of development and determine its direction and pace.

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IV

This first phase of imperialism is now over. What forces led to this and what type of evolution is taking its place?

The engine of change is provided by the *anti-imperialist national liberation movement*. This movement comprises three social forces: (1) the (still emerging) superexploited proletariat; (2) the mass of peasantry, doubly exploited by the local classes which dominate it (the "feudal lords") and by monopoly capital which has drawn the "feudal lords" into the "world market"; and (3) the national bourgeoisie, at this stage a "potential" class rather than a "real" one, which aspires to alter the terms of the international division of labor so as to acquire an economic base of its own. For the international division of labor of the "colonial pact" is simple: the periphery exports only primary commodities, with which it has to buy all the manufactured goods necessary to satisfy its needs, mainly for luxury consumption: it is not allowed any industry. The national bourgeoisie and the proletariat compete for the leadership of the national liberation movement, i.e., the leadership of the peasant revolt.

On the whole, this first phase ended in the victory of the national liberation movement under bourgeois leadership. This victory forced imperialism to revise the terms of the division of labor, and so enabled the Third World to start industrializing. We can date this victory: it is earlier in some places (for example in Mexico with the revolution of the 1910s, in Turkey with Kemal Atatürk, in Egypt with the Wafd, in Brazil and Argentina in the "populist" form) and later in the others (in South Asia after the Second World War, in Africa with the independence of the 1960s, etc.). Except for East Asia and Cuba, where the national liberation movements effected at that stage a withdrawal from the world imperialist system, everywhere else the triumphant national bourgeoisie embarked upon a strategy of industrialization which now has a name: the strategy of import substitution.

Since the peripheral model is characterized by the specific interconnection expressed by the link between the export sector and luxury-goods consumption, import-substitution industrialization will start from "the end," i.e., the manufacture of products

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corresponding to the more advanced stages of development of the center, in other words, consumer durables. These products are highly capital-intensive and users of scarce resources (skilled labor, etc.). The result will necessarily be a *distortion* in the allocation of resources in favor of these products and to the detriment of the production of mass consumption goods. The latter sector will be systematically handicapped: it will not give rise to any "demand" for its products and will not attract any capital or labor to ensure its modernization. This explains the stagnation in "subsistence agriculture" whose potential products attract little demand, and which does not acquire a large enough share in the allocation of scarce resources to enable any serious changes to be made. Any "development strategy" based on "profitability" (the structure of income distribution, relative prices, and demand being what they are), necessarily leads to this type of systematic distortion.

From the "social" angle, this model leads to a specific phenomenon, the *marginalization* of the masses. By this we mean a series of mechanisms of various kinds which impoverish the masses: proletarianization, semi-proletarianization, and impoverishment without proletarianization of the peasants; urbanization and massive increase of urban unemployment and underemployment; etc. Unemployment and underemployment thus have a function different from their function in the central model: the high level of unemployment ensures a minimum wage rate which is relatively rigid and frozen both in the export sector and in the luxury goods sector; wages do not emerge both as a cost and an income which creates a demand, vital to the central model, but on the contrary figure only as a cost—demand itself originating elsewhere, from abroad or from the income of the privileged social classes.

The "externally propelled" nature of this type of development which perpetuates itself in spite of the increasing diversification of the economy, its industrialization, etc., is not *original sin* or a *deus ex machina* foreign to the dependent peripheral model of capital accumulation, since it is a model of *reproduction* of its functional social and economic conditions. The marginalization of the masses is the very condition underlying the integration of the minority within the world system,

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the guarantee of an increasing income for this minority, which conditions the adoption by them, of "European" patterns of consumption. The extension of this pattern of consumption ensures the "profitability" of the luxury-goods sector and confirms the social, cultural, ideological, and political integration of the privileged classes.

At this stage of diversification and reinforcement of underdevelopment, there appear new mechanisms of domination/dependence. Cultural and political mechanisms, but also economic ones: technological dependence and the domination by transnational companies. The luxury-goods sector, in fact, calls for capital-intensive investments which only the big transnational oligopoly firms are in a position to embark upon and which constitute the material basis for technological dependence. But also, at this stage, more complex forms of the structure of ownership and economic management make their appearance. Experience shows that the participation of private or public local capital—however subservient—in the process of import-substitution industrialization is quite common. It also shows—at least in the big countries—that a large enough market created by the development of the export and luxury-goods sectors may make it possible to create a sector producing capital goods. The latter is frequently brought into being by the state. But the development of a basic industry and a public sector does not in any way mean that the system is evolving towards a mature self-reliant form, since the capital-goods sector is here used, not for the development of mass consumption, but to serve the growth of export and luxury-goods production.

So this second phase of imperialism is by no means a "stage" towards the constitution of a self-reliant economy. It does not reproduce a previous phase of central development, but on the contrary extends the first externally-propelled phase. In fact:

(1) The "agricultural revolution" has still not taken place. We must, however, qualify this a little. The national bourgeoisie in power has often eliminated some former allies of imperialism and has, among other things, carried out some land reforms on the basis of which a development of capitalism in agriculture has sometimes been launched (the "green revolution"). Can

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this development "wipe out" the original backwardness of agriculture and bring the peripheral model closer to the central model? This question must be settled not in "theory," but in "fact." What we note is that the relative backwardness of agriculture has been increasing to the paradoxical point where the Third World countries, the majority of whose population is rural, have become importers of food. The reason for this failure is not mysterious, it is political: in our era the bourgeoisie has to be supported by classes capable of dominating the peasants, even if these are more broadly based (kulaks instead of large landowners); it cannot be supported by the peasant masses whose interests are in conflict with its own. While the central bourgeoisies had the "necessary time" for a slow primitive accumulation based on alliance with the peasants, those of the periphery face the dual constraint of external pressure from the monopolies and the internal threat of socialism.

(2) The dominant class alliances remain international: the bourgeoisie takes the place of the former "feudal lords" and the compradors as the subordinate ally of imperialism. Because of this, the bourgeoisie during the second phase loses its former national character: it is "compradorized." The "national" state it dominates therefore remains weak and poorly integrated.

(3) The continuation of the development process remains dependent on exports, which still consist essentially of raw materials. This main source of finance for the necessary imports of capital equipment ultimately determines the rates of growth, and in this sense growth is still externally propelled.

The crisis of this second phase of imperialism was opened by the demand for a "new international economic order."

Reduced to its bare outlines, this demand seems to be the following: to impose a rise in the real prices of raw materials exported by the Third World countries in order to acquire further resources which, together with the importing of advanced technologies, could finance a new stage of industrialization involving large-scale exports to the centers of products manufactured in the periphery with the advantage of favorable natural resources and abundant cheap labor—hence the demand for access to the markets of developed countries for these industrial products.

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Since 1973 this demand has constituted the clear common objective of all the Third World countries. It is put forward as the necessary and sufficient condition for completing political independence by giving it an economic basis. It is also presented as a possible joint demand of all the Third World states irrespective of their social options and their international sympathies.

This new situation raises some essential issues on which there is a need for the most open-ended debate. The first issue is whether the local bourgeoisie—which generally dominates these states—can "combat imperialism" to impose its point of view. There are those who argue that the new international division of labor is the strategic goal of imperialism itself, and that this demand is therefore manipulated by the monopolies, particularly the North American monopolies, and does not express a specific goal of the Third World states in conflict with the strategy of imperialism. These people usually give priority to the interimperialist conflicts (United States, Europe, Japan) over the apparent North-South conflict. We know that this "theory" was abundantly formulated in connection with the raising of the price of petroleum by OPEC in 1973, both in right-wing and left-wing (even ultra-left-wing) versions. But the facts do not bear out this interpretation. In fact the theory only reflects the naive views of an ultra-left which, with wishful thinking, would like the bloc of bourgeoisies to appear without "cracks" on the world scene so as to "simplify" (on paper) the tasks of the proletariat which, they assume, are everywhere the same, because the proletariat would not have to take account of the contradictions between the bourgeoisies.

In the past, the bourgeoisie of the peripheries had clashed with imperialism. The transition from the first to the second phase of imperialism was not "planned" by the monopolies: it was imposed by the national liberation movement through which the bourgeoisie of the peripheries won, against imperialism, the right to an industry. But, as we have said, the industrialization strategy pursued during this second phase transformed the relations between the bourgeoisie of the peripheries and the monopolies. The peripheral bourgeoisie ceased to be national and became the subordinate ally of imperialism by

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joining in the new division of labor. That ally is now rebelling and demanding new terms for this division of labor. It does not thereby become "national," since its demand is located right at the heart of the system, but it is rebelling all the same. If that rebellion were to succeed, it would simply inaugurate a new phase of imperialism characterized by a new division of labor. For there is no doubt that "in theory" this new division can be "absorbed," "co-opted." But only "in theory," because what counts in history are the unexpected accidents, and there can be some here and there in the peripheries and in the centers (and serious ones for capitalism) during the transition, laden with contradictions, from the second to the third "theoretical" phase of imperialism.

The second issue is whether this third possible phase would, or would not, be a stage towards the autonomy of the peripheries. The bourgeoisies of the Third World argue that it would be, just as they asserted at the beginning of the second phase that *it* would be. But the facts have belied these illusions, which were shared at the time by a large proportion of the left in the Third World.

My own view is that if the demands of the peripheral bourgeoisie were to succeed, this would not by any means constitute a new stage along a line of development leading gradually to the flourishing of mature capitalist formations similar to those of the developed centers. Once again, the vision of a linear development by stages will inevitably be disproved.

The reason, a quite fundamental one, is that the new division of labor would be based on the export by the periphery of cheap manufactured goods, i.e., goods for which the advantage of low wages (bearing in mind comparative productivities) makes it possible to raise the rate of profit in the world system as a whole. The world-wide equalization of profit would then modify relative prices and hence would conceal this extra transfer of value from the periphery to the center. In other words, the new division of labor would perpetuate and worsen unequal exchange. Furthermore, this unequal division of labor would perpetuate the distorted pattern of demand in the peripheries to the detriment of mass consumption, just as in the previous phases. Therefore, the development of the world

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system would remain fundamentally unequal, and external demand would still be the main motive force propelling this still dependent type of development.

Need we add that, in this context of renovated dependence, the backwardness of agriculture would also be perpetuated? No doubt some nuances must be introduced here, because, after all, capitalism would continue the progress in agriculture which it started in the second phase of imperialism, but certainly at rates far lower than the progress to be expected in the traditional and new export sectors and in that of luxury goods production for the domestic market, since these sectors benefit from massive importing of the most advanced world-scale technologies.

In this general context, we may well wonder what could be the real significance of the slogans about "self-reliant development" and "collective self-reliance" which accompany the demand for this new international division of labor.

Actually, the first of these slogans would be devoid of all content. It would mean nothing more than the ideological justification of the (impossible) claim that a development "by progressive stages" within the world system of (unequal) division of labor ought to lead to economic independence.

On the other hand, the second slogan—"collective self-reliance"—does acquire a meaning, albeit a particular one, in this perspective. The first two phases of imperialism did not imply any "cooperation" between countries and regions of the periphery. Being exclusively outward-oriented and limited in their industrialization to the satisfaction of their domestic markets, the peripheral economies had nothing to exchange with each other. In theory, the third phase of the unequal division of labor does not call for any more positive cooperation between the Third World countries, apart from conducting a joint struggle for an increase in the prices of their primary exports (through producers' associations), since the "second wind" of peripheral industrialization would derive its momentum from exports to the centers. The fact remains that the Third World countries are highly unequal candidates for taking advantage of this new division of labor. Those best placed as regards their economic potential (abundant natural resources, more advanced proletarianization, etc.) and their political solidity ("legitima-

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tion" of the power of the weak local bourgeoisie, military strength, etc.) could advance faster on the path of the new dependence if they also had markets in the less developed countries and if they could have direct and cheap access to their supplies of raw materials and food. Naturally, the problematic of the so-called sub-imperialism is relevant here.

An example will illustrate this vision of the interlinking of the "Third" and "Fourth" Worlds in the new global perspective. Together, the countries of the Persian Gulf, Egypt, and Sudan constitute—if the political conditions were favorable, which is far from being the case today—a "good candidate." The Gulf would provide the capital; the export industry would be concentrated in Egypt; and Sudan would export food to the latter. Let us look more closely at the mechanism of this interlinking. Even if Sudanese agriculture were to be "modernized" so as to supply the necessary exportable surplus, its productivity would still for a long time to come be lower than that of the advanced countries. But Sudanese foodstuffs will have to be competitive with those of North America on the Egyptian market to ensure the lowest possible wages in Egypt. This would be possible only if Sudanese peasants were superexploited (rewards to labor more unequal than the differential productivities). In its turn, Egypt proletarians would be superexploited since their starvation wage together with their relatively high productivity would make it possible to export their products to the centers. A double and interlinked unequal exchange would operate in favor of the center; the Sudan would cease to be directly dependent on the center and would become the partner of the higher ranking periphery in which the export industry would be concentrated.

VI

But if this is the content of the organization of the new phase of imperialism, cannot the triple demand for national autonomy, collective self-reliance, and a new world order have quite a different meaning and aim at different goals? If so, under what conditions?

While the pivot of the neo-imperialist interpretation of the program in question is a new unequal international division

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of labor conditioning both the internal strategies and the objectives of intra-Third World cooperation, this same program assumes quite a different meaning when one proceeds in the opposite direction, i.e., when one *first* defines the internal objectives of a really self-reliant and "popular" development and *then* considers the ways in which the world order must be acted on in order to promote the achievement of these objectives.

A genuinely self-reliant development is necessarily that of the people, because externally-propelled development in all phases of evolution of the imperialist system effectively benefits the privileged dominant classes which make an alliance with the monopolies. Conversely and as a corollary, a "popular" development can only be national and self-reliant. For in order to serve the mass of the peasantry, industrialization must first be made to concentrate on improving rural productivity. Similarly, in order to serve the urban masses, it is necessary to give up luxury production for the local market and give up exporting, since they are both based on the reproduction of a cheap labor force. Let us consider more closely this authentic strategy aimed both at national independence and social progress.

So far the industrialization of the Third World has not been contemplated as aiding the progress of agriculture. Unlike the countries of the center, where the "agricultural revolution" preceded the "industrial revolution," the countries of the periphery have imported the latter without having started the former stage. That is the source of the distortions typical of these countries, and of the renewed dependence which fetters them. First we must go into reverse gear. Up to now industry in the Third World has been parasitic, in the sense that it has based its accumulation on extortions from the rural world in real terms (it gets its labor from the rural-urban migration) and financial terms (heavy taxation, internal terms of trade unfavorable to the peasants, etc.) with no counterpart provided in return to sustain a take-off of agriculture. How can this course be altered? Clearly all cost-benefit criteria, which are necessarily based on reproducing price and income-distribution patterns, must be entirely abandoned and replaced by other fundamental criteria of resource allocation. Two essential issues are involved here which we will simply point out: (1) how a

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"modern" industrial sector, with its basic guidelines renovated, is to be linked up with the sector of small-scale rural industries which can directly mobilize the latent forces of progress, and (2) why the social form required here is that of rural collectivization, even at a low level of development of the productive forces, and not the form of "private" agriculture even if remodelled by a radical land reform. It is only on these conditions that agriculture—which must first make up its historical time-lag—will be able to finance a healthy industrialization and provide a food surplus sufficient to ensure national independence.

Similarly, industry must be made to serve the poor urban masses and no longer be guided by the "profitability" criteria which favor the privileged local market and exports to the developed centers.

In any case, this kind of remodelled industry cannot find its technological models ready-made in the developed countries. Nor can it find them in the technological past of the centers, borrowing their production techniques of yesterday, as the theme of "intermediate technologies" suggests. This is because the problem here is different, since in this case industrialization has to enable the agricultural revolution to take place, whereas in the center it was based on that revolution. So the real issue is not the conditions of "transfer of technology," but the creation of conditions conducive to creativity in this field, not out of motives of "cultural nationalism" but for objective reasons. Furthermore, there is another problem to be pointed out: the borrowed technologies are necessarily carriers of capitalist relations of production, whereas the social framework required by the agrarian revolution and urban mobilization must be socialist. This is a fundamental question which reflects the fact that socialism is necessary in the periphery since it is an essential condition of progress and independence and not, therefore, the result of an ideological or moral motivation which could be "free." We simply raise this question in passing; it is the reason why we shall continue to assert that the national liberation movement of the periphery mainly constitutes a stage in the socialist transformation of the world and only secondarily a phase in the development of capitalism.

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Although a self-reliant development model is not in theory synonymous with autarky, it may lead to it whether we like it or not, for obvious internal and external political reasons. This may be the case, not only for vast countries—witness the experiences of the USSR and China—but even for small countries (Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, Cuba, Albania). So, although autarky in itself is not synonymous with self-reliant development (think of Burma), it may be the condition for it under certain historical circumstances.

But imposed autarky may also, if it is too drastic or total, hamper self-reliant development by involving extra costs which could in some cases be very heavy. For the point is not to reject any theory of comparative advantages, but only to note that if the international division of labor is unequal, the argument of comparative advantages loses its validity. A country choosing the self-reliant and "popular" path may find itself in a situation where it is relatively cheaper to import certain inputs needed to accelerate its development (such as energy in some cases, or certain raw materials, or capital goods) than to do without them.

To deal with this type of problem, the liberated states of the Third World could act collectively in two directions:

The first is that of mutual assistance. For those Third World countries rich in natural resources which are usually exploited for the sole benefit of the developed countries, could exchange with each other the raw materials that will be useful for their national projects of self-reliant development. At present these imports nearly always transit through the developed centers which control the raw materials "markets" and centralize the payment facilities. By agreements for mutual assistance (trade agreements and multilateral-payments agreements), the liberated countries of the Third World could short-circuit these middlemen. Moreover, exchanges of technology could accelerate the development of appropriate production techniques, since the problems the Third World countries have to solve are often similar. We can see that this type of cooperation within the Third World is very different from what was envisaged in the neo-imperialist context. We are no longer talk-

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ing of "common markets" which can only reproduce and aggravate the inequalities of development. What we propose is guidelines for a "package deal" in the spirit of cooperation in the service of an autonomous national development.

The second direction of collective action is aimed at modifying the international division of labor between developed countries and Third World countries in the direction of a reduction of inequality, and no longer that of a "renovation" with no reduction of inequality. At present a large number of Third World countries have already been won over to the idea of confronting the veritable monopoly of the "consumers" with associations of raw-materials producers, and of strengthening these associations by establishing collective support funds. A self-reliant development strategy involves more than this. It requires as a first step the national (state) control of the exploitation of its natural resources. By this we mean not only the formal nationalization of that exploitation, but *also* and *above all* the regulation of the flow of exports and the *reduction* of the flow of imports required by the internal strategy of self-reliant development. For at present the externally oriented strategy is based on exactly the opposite relation: exports are first pushed to the maximum, solely as a function of the "demand" (of the centers), and then the question arises of how to use the export earnings. The unequal international division of labor is based on this strategy. Reducing inequality in the division of labor most certainly implies reducing the flow of raw-materials exports. The incredible resistance of the developed world to this reduction is evidence that the center, despite so many misleading speeches, cannot do without the pillage of the Third World. If that pillage were to stop, the centers would be forced to modify their structures accordingly, in order to adjust to a new, less unequal international division of labor. Then, and only then, could we begin to speak of a genuine new world order, and no longer merely of new terms of the unequal international division of labor.

These two general lines—that of a new imperialist order and that of an order which would really promote progress in the liberation of the peoples of the Third World—are not just

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two verbal themes, two possible theoretical alternatives. They are already actually clashing and are the subject of daily conflicts.

The main reason for this is the contradictory nature of the national liberation movement. This reflects both the development of capitalism and its crisis. Hence the trends of capitalism and those of socialism are constantly clashing within the movement itself, precisely because the forces of capitalism here are still those of a weak, peripheral, dependent capitalism, which objectively cannot attain the goals of a mature capitalism. These forces are clashing in all the regimes of the Third World. We know very well that these bourgeois trends also persist in those countries that have broken with capitalism. But, conversely, the capitalist states of the Third World do not have the complete and unilateral nature of the central capitalist states. Hence the volatility of their regimes and the wide range of situations, ranging from triumphant neo-colonialism through shamefaced or crisis-ridden neo-colonialism to nationalism in conflict with colonialism.

For the conflict with imperialism has well and truly begun. So far the themes of the new international order have been totally rejected, as witness the failure of UNCTAD IV and of the North-South negotiations. At the ideological level itself, the Club of Rome is endeavoring to oppose a substitute construct to these themes. The fact is that the themes of the new order involve the aspiration to control natural resources and to strengthen national states, which imperialism does not accept. Imperialism would therefore like to substitute for the new order the "Rio Project" (Reshaping of the International Order!) which is an ideological formulation of the need to transfer some of the industries of the centers to the peripheries under the wing of the multinationals.

In theory, the new unequal division of labor would suit the bourgeoisies of the peripheries and the monopolies of the centers. For the transfer of industries would make it possible to recreate in the center a reserve army of unemployed which a quarter of a century of growth has reduced to such an extent that the system has lost its "normal" flexibility. And this unemployment would raise the rate of surplus value in the center

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itself. In the longer run, the center would develop the new activities that control the whole system—the "quaternary" (software, research and development, etc.), the new leading industries, the military sector—thereby renewing and extending the conditions of the Social Democratic hegemony in the center.

But in the long run, as we know, we are all dead. At present resistance to the transfer of industries still largely prevails. And this resistance frustrates the Third World bourgeoisies who, being the weaker partners, would have to bear the whole brunt of the crisis. It then becomes impossible to attenuate the violent social contradictions of the Third World: the food deficit gets bigger, the establishment of export industries is postponed *sine die*, etc. Hence the political conditions may evolve in a direction favorable to the beginning of self-reliant development. This is the reality: the struggle of the Third World against the dominant imperialist hegemony. For many reasons, this struggle is still today the main force for the transformation of the world.

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THE UNITED STATES VERSUS HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE THIRD WORLD

BY NOAM CHOMSKY
AND EDWARD S. HERMAN

The Vietnam war has been digested by the U.S. political system with hardly a trace. Essentially the same people manage national affairs, and possess virtually exclusive access to the mass media; the critics of the war have lapsed, or been forced, into silence; and the media have not allowed the vast accumulation of sordid details about our Vietnam involvement to disturb the myth of U.S. benevolence and concerned pursuit of democracy abroad. This myth has remained unruffled even in the face of the accelerating "Brazilianization" of the Third World over the past decade, very often under active U.S. sponsorship, with frequent displacement of democratic governments and extensive and growing resort to repression, including physical torture, imprisonment, death squads, and mysterious "disappearances," all within the U.S. sphere of influence. In this context, the state which has sponsored and supported the Somoza family, the Shah, Marcos, Park, Pinochet, Suharto,

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This is an abridged and adapted version of the Introduction to a forthcoming volume entitled *The Pentagon-CIA Archipelago*. An earlier edition of this work was published but then suppressed by the Warner Communications system in 1973. Noam Chomsky teaches at MIT and Edward S. Herman at the University of Pennsylvania.

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and the Brazilian generals can announce a campaign for human rights throughout the world and be taken with the utmost seriousness.

Brainwashing Under Freedom

This all represents a testimonial to the greatly underrated capacities of what we may call "brainwashing under freedom." The ability of the system—that is to say, the important power factions in the system and their intellectual and media spokesmen—to reconstruct and shape the perspectives of history and the interpretation of current events in accordance with its own interests is truly impressive. The background against which human rights issues have arisen in the period since 1945 includes an unparalleled, world-wide economic expansion by the United States, its establishment of a global military presence with 3,375 foreign military bases "virtually surrounding both the Soviet Union and Communist China,"[1]* and interventions in the affairs of other states that are unmatched in number, scale, and global reach. In the face of these developments, the myth has been successfully established in the public mind, and in liberal circles in Western Europe, that the United States is merely "containing" other "expansionist" powers! During the early phases of the Vietnam War, by a blatant misrepresentation of Lin Piao's call for "peoples' war"—suppressing his reiterated statement of the need "to adhere to a policy of self-reliance . . . on the strength of the masses in one's own country"—and by a general propaganda barrage, the *Chinese* were established by the mass media as "expansionist," while the United States, engaged in the wholesale destruction of a distant small country on the border of China, with bases around China, and supporting Chiang on Taiwan, was responding to China's aggressiveness, preventing dominoes from falling, protecting freedom, etc. Never was the United States portrayed in the mass media or mainstream academic scholarship as engaged in the positive pursuit of its own economic-imperial interests at the expense of any people standing in its way; nor were its exploits described as subversion or outright aggression.

* Notes will be found at the end of the article.

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The hypocrisy and sheer silliness of much political commentary in this regard are truly remarkable. To cite only one example, William V. Shannon, liberal commentator for the *New York Times* and President Carter's ambassador-designate to the Republic of Ireland, laments the failures of American policy in these terms (September 28, 1974):

> For a quarter century, the United States has been trying to do good, encourage political liberty, and promote social justice in the Third World. But in Latin America where we have traditionally been a friend and protector and in Asia where we have made the most painful sacrifices of our young men and our wealth, our relationships have mostly proved to be a recurring source of sorrow, waste, and tragedy.

Even in Chile, he explains, our "benevolence, intelligence and hard work have proved not to be enough," as we intervened "with the best of motives." We are trapped in "ironic paradoxes" as we seek to "advance our moral ideals" throughout the world.

All of this may be regarded as commonplace. In any society, apologists will seek to portray external ventures in a favorable light. Nevertheless, despite massive evidence to the contrary, liberal and social democratic opinion in the United States and Western Europe continues to regard this country as an "exception," a country in which ideas flow freely and without discrimination and where the truth tends eventually to prevail (*vide* Vietnam and Watergate). The myth is reinforced by material success and power, which have helped generate a high degree of self-righteousness. And it is promulgated by a huge propaganda apparatus that tends to dominate the domestic and international flow of "information." Power has also meant innumerable links and dependency relations with elites throughout the world, and thus strong psychological and interest pressures influencing them to perceive issues from the viewpoint of the U.S. leadership. The British Labor government's consistent support of the U.S. assault on Vietnam, with only the mildest admonitions and occasional foot-dragging, represents the typical governmental and leadership response outside the Communist world. (The Swedish government's open and sharp criticism was virtually unique in the "Free World," despite an

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unprovoked aggression of extraordinary savagery.) U.S. beneficence and good intentions are presumptions abroad that sustain self-righteousness and self-deception at home.

Such self-deception can reach quite extraordinary heights. Suppose that Fidel Castro had organized or participated in at least eight assassination attempts against the various presidents of the United States since 1959. It is safe to conclude that the *New York Times,* CBS News, and the mass media in general would have portrayed him as an international gangster and assassin, who must be excluded from the community of civilized nations. But when it is revealed that the United States has made or participated in that many attempts on Castro's life,[2] it's just "one of those things that governments do." The press will hardly suggest on the basis of such information that the world's "nations have to evaluate the U.S. potentiality as a responsible world citizen," to paraphrase a recent *Christian Science Monitor* editorial that had the gall to assert that the United States, after the record of the past 30 years, is entitled to stand in judgment over Vietnam for its alleged violations of human rights!

Suppose further that Fidel Castro had arranged for his agents in the United States to disperse various disease carriers in agricultural regions in an attempt to poison and destroy livestock and crops. Can one imagine the hysteria of the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Times* on the depths to which barbarian evil can sink under communism? The United States actually did carry out such an act against Cuba, reported in the press in early 1977 as a minor news item on the back pages—500,000 pigs had to be destroyed in Cuba as a result of a deliberately spread viral disease. And according to a recent statement of a Canadian adviser to the Cuban government, as early as 1962 he was paid $5,000 by a Defense Intelligence Agency representative to infect Cuban poultry with a viral disease.[3] Editorial outrage over these claims has been modest, to say the least.

President Carter has kindly offered to move toward normalizing relations with Cuba if it will refrain from "participating in violence across the oceans, [and] will recommit [sic] the former relationship that existed in Cuba toward human rights. . . ." Eight admitted attempts on Castro's life, a sponsored inva-

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sion, innumerable acts of sabotage—but Carter can talk about Cuban external violence *and not be challenged or ridiculed by anyone whose voice can be heard.* Carter's reference to the state of civil rights in Cuba under the Batista dictatorship also elicited neither criticism nor satire. Where such hypocrisy and distortion can pass without comment, it is evident that the mass media are maintaining a system of thought control that can establish and nourish the Big Lie as effectively as any system of state censorship.

Retail Violence as "Terror"—Wholesale Violence as Maintaining "Order" and "Stability"

The use of the words "terror" and "terrorism" as semantic tools of power is worthy of special note. In their dictionary meaning, these words refer to "intimidation" by the "systematic use of violence" as a means of both "governing" and opposing existing governments. Yet all through the Vietnam War these words were restricted to the use of violence in resistance to what General Lansdale called the "fascistic state" imposed by American force. The essence of U.S. policy in South Vietnam, and elsewhere in Indochina, was intimidation by virtually unrestrained violence against the peasant populations. Nevertheless, this was not terror or terrorism, invidious words reserved for the relatively small and much more selective use of force by the NLF, from the time when the former Viet Minh was authorized to use violence in self-defense against official U.S.-backed terrorism in the late 1950s.

The same Orwellian usage was standard on the home front. Students, war protesters, Black Panthers, and assorted other dissidents were effectively branded as violent and terroristic by a government that dropped four million tons of bombs over a nine-year period on a small peasant country with no means of defense. Beatings of demonstrators, infiltration of dissident organizations, extensive use of agent provocateur tactics, even FBI complicity in political assassination were not designated by any such terms.

In mass media jargon today, Argentine guerrillas attacking a police station are terrorists, while the police and military who kill guerrillas are maintaining order—even when they use

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or connive with "death squads" who abduct and murder union leaders, scientists, political activists, priests, and the wives and children of people objectionable to the regime. Both official and Amnesty International sources estimate over 1,300 killings in Argentina in 1976 alone, carried out mainly by police and parapolice death squads. By contrast, the State Department's Office for Combatting Terrorism estimates a world-wide total of 292 deaths caused by "terrorism" from 1973 through 1976.[4] The daily Argentine abductions and murders, largely ignored in the United States, are sometimes reported as simple three-liners on the back pages in the language of the handouts of the officials implementing the terror, or written up by Juan de Onis in the *New York Times* very even-handedly—the extremists of the left and right are engaged in disturbing mutual violence, in which the right seems to have the edge in the killing competition, with General Videla in the "middle," sincerely trying to contain the deterioration but frustrated by unexplained forces.[5]

Similarly, "normal" police intimidation, killing, and torture in such countries as Brazil are barely newsworthy in the United States. The Brazilian death squads, also recruited from among the police, came into existence in 1964 and have thrived ever since. They even own property and operate a newspaper, *O Gringo*. And they are responsible for murders running into the thousands. The *Jornal do Brasil* of April 20, 1970, reports:

> In Guanabara and in the state of Rio alone, the number of deaths attributed to the Death Squad is more than 1,000, that is, almost 400 a year. The victims show signs of unnecessary cruelty. For example, between January 11 and July 1, 1969, 40 bodies were found in the waters of the Macacu River, buried in the mud near the bridge between Maje and Itaborai. All of the bodies, in an advanced state of decomposition, still showed the marks of handcuffs and burns caused by cigarettes and multiple bruising; some of them were still handcuffed. According to the findings of the autopsy, it was noted that many had been tortured, shot, and then drowned.

In the review *Veja* of March 3, 1971, the director of the periodical states that out of 123 homicides attributed to the death squad in Sao Paulo between November 1968 and June 1970, only five had been investigated by the magistrate. It is

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evident that these killings are carried out under the authority and protection of the state. They are very numerous, sadistic, and display a Nazi-like social pathology that should be highly newsworthy and deserving of editorial attention. But the Brazilian junta is U.S.-sponsored, very friendly to U.S. business—if not to its own dissenters and poor—and regarded with positive enthusiasm by our bankers and businessmen. Wholesale violence by fascist client states is not "terror."

Neo-colonialism and the Washington Connection

Since the Second World War there has been a steady deterioration of political and social conditions in Latin America and generally throughout Third World areas that are within the "Free World" (mainly U.S.) orbit. Liberal ideologists treat this as fortuitous and independent of U.S. choice and power, claiming that as a democracy we support democratic institutions abroad, while any contrary trends are based on exogenous forces over which the United States has no control. In the process it is necessary to suppress and belittle the long-standing relations between the U.S. political-military elite and the military juntas and comprador elements in states like Brazil, the economic advantages of Third World fascism to U.S. economic interests, and the evidence of positive U.S. political and economic support for brutal dictatorships and frequent hostility to *reformism* as well as radicalism in the Third World.

The real relationships, as opposed to the ideological claptrap of the Max Lerners, Arthur Schlesinger, Jrs., et al., is shown on the accompanying table, which relates U.S. economic and military aid (and that of U.S.-dominated international lending agencies) to various political and human rights and economic factors. The table focuses on a series of strategic changes, whose dates are shown in column 1, for ten U.S. client countries. Columns 2-4 describe the effect of these events on the political environment and human rights, with positive signs (+) indicating an increased use of torture and larger numbers of political prisoners—i.e., a deterioration of human rights—and negative signs (−), the reverse. Column 5 shows the effect of these events on the "climate of investment": 5a shows + if laws or regulations were subsequently changed to reduce taxes

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on foreign companies or make it easier for them to repatriate profits, and 5b shows + if labor conditions were improved from the standpoint of foreign investors by means of government controls over wages or the weakening or destruction of independent labor organizations. Columns 6-10 show percentage changes in aid and credits from the United States and international organizations for the two or three years after the political change as compared with the comparable period prior to the event.[6] For example, under Brazil, 1964 is a strategic date as noted in column 1. We can see that human rights deteriorated, investment climate improved, and overall aid and credits by the U.S. and multinational lending organizations went up 112 percent in the three years following the coup as compared to the three years preceding the coup.

There are a number of problems associated with this table.[7] Trends in torture and numbers of political prisoners are not easy to establish, and in a few instances the evidence is quite tentative. Aid figures can also be misleading, as other factors may temporarily distort a real relationship: e.g., the decline in aid to South Korea after the Park coup of 1972 was greatly influenced by the withdrawal of South Korean mercenaries from South Vietnam and the resultant decline in U.S. payments for these hired soldiers. The reduction in military aid to Chile after the fascist coup of 1973 is also misleading, since the high rate of military aid under Allende reflected U.S. support for the right-wing military in the interests of counter-revolution—economic aid to the civil society declined precipitously under Allende. The collapse of international organization aid to Chile during the Allende period, and its rapid recovery under fascism, provides strong evidence for the dominance of U.S. economic and political interests in the decision-making processes of the international agencies.[8]

For all its limitations this table bears out in graphic form a set of relationships that should be obvious to any student of recent Third World history. For most of the sample countries, U.S.-controlled aid has been positively related to investment climate and inversely related to the maintenance of a democratic order and human rights. Only in the case of South Korea and Thailand is the pattern reversed. The South Korean exception

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Relationship Between U.S. Aid, Investment Climate,

Country	*Strategic Political Dates* [1] (1)	*Positive (+) or Negative (−) Effects on Democracy* [1] (2)	*Decrease (−) or Increase (+) in Use of Torture or Death Squads* [1] (3)	*Decrease (−) or Increase (+) in No. of Political Prisoners* [1] (4)	*Improvement in Investment Climate: tax laws eased* (5a)
Brazil	1964	−	+	+	+
Chile	1973	−	+	+	+
Dominican Republic	1965	−	+	NA*	+
Guatemala	1954	−	+	NA	+
Indonesia	1965	−	+	+	+
Iran	1953	−	+	+	+
Philippines	1972	−	+	+	+
South Korea	1972	−	+	+	+
Thailand	1973	+	−	NA	−
Uruguay	1973	−	+	+	+

*NA: not available.

Sources: 1. Information on torture and political prisoners mostly from the *Amnesty International Report on Torture,* 1975 and *The Amnesty International Report, 1975-76,* 1976. Supplemented with data from newspaper articles, journals, and books on the specific countries. Data on investment climate largely from articles, journals, and books on the specific countries.

we have explained above. The row for Thailand shows a sharp reduction of U.S. economic and military aid following the moves toward democratic government in October 1973, slightly more than offset by U.S. and international organization credits. But the bulk of the credits consisted of a large World Bank loan made in 1974 while control by the Thai elite was still pretty much intact. In 1975 World Bank loans fell to zero for the first time in a decade. It should also be noted that there was a large influx of U.S. military aid into Thailand in 1976 (not shown on the table), which no doubt facilitated the counter-revolutionary coup of October 1976.

The pattern revealed is clear, persistent, rational, and ugly. Human rights have tended to stand in the way of the satisfactory pursuit of U.S. economic interests—and they have, accordingly, been brushed aside, systematically. U.S. economic

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and Human Rights in 10 U.S. Client States

Improvement in Investment Climate: labor repressed (5b)	*Economic Aid (% change)*[2] (6)	*Military Aid (% change)*[2] (7)	(6) + (7) *(% change)*[2] (8)	*U.S. and Multinational Credits (% change)*[2] (9)	*Total* (8) + (9) *(% change)*[2] (10)
+	+ 14	–40	– 7	+ 180	+ 112
+	+558	– 8	+259	+1,079	+ 770
+	+ 57	+10	+ 52	+ 305	+ 133
+	NA	NA	NA	NA	+5,300
NA	– 81	–79	– 81	+ 653	+ 62
+	NA	–	–	–	+ 900
+	+204	+67	+143	+ 171	+ 161
+	– 52	–56	– 55	+ 183	– 9
–	– 63	–64	– 64	+ 218	+ 5
+	– 11	+ 9	– 2	+ 32	+ 21

2. Data on aid taken from *U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants and Assistance from International Organizations,* A.I.D., 1972 and 1976 editions, for years 1962-1975. Data previous to 1962 taken from *Historical Statistics of the United States,* Bicentennial Edition, Dept. of Commerce, 1975.

interests in the Third World have dictated a policy of containing revolution, preserving an open door for U.S. investment, and assuring favorable conditions of investment. Reformist efforts to improve the lot of the poor and oppressed, including the encouragement of independent trade unions, are not conducive to a favorable climate of investment. Reformism means "instability" and strikes; whereas in Brazil, as *Business Week* reports (December 13, 1976): "Fiat may still find Brazil a good place to put its money; the military government is stable, and labor peace prevails." Democracy itself is also not conducive to a favorable climate. As noted by Edward A. Jesser, Jr., chairman of the United Jersey Banks, in a speech to the American Bankers Association: "Quick and tough decisions can be made in a relatively short time in a country such as Brazil compared to the difficulty there is in reaching agreement

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on what actions to take in a democracy."[9] So much for democracy.

The perspective of the business community was illuminated in a recent ten-page Special Report by *Business Week* (August 9, 1976) on "Reversal of Policy: Latin America Opens The Door To Foreign Investment Again." The editors are positively ecstatic about these new developments. The report is studded with such terms as "pragmatic," "realistic," "stability," "tough," and "confidence." The words "democracy" and "torture" do not appear in the Special Report, nor is there any discussion of trends in income distribution or the allocation of budgetary resources to arms, business subsidies, and education and medical research. The word "repression" appears once, in the following context:

> A unifying theme of Latin military governments is that they stand—or claim to stand—for social and economic progress, not just law and order. Faced with a choice, however, they are likely to postpone social improvement as a goal secondary to economic consolidation [sic: whatever this means] and political stability, imposed with varying degrees of repression.

A unifying theme is that the juntas "claim to stand" for social progress, but they may not get around to it in our time.

These muddled apologetics exhaust *Business Week*'s analysis of welfare, income distribution, and political trends in Latin America. *Business Week* is even quite pleased with Chile, "whose economy had been reduced to a shambles" by Allende—no mention of the CIA-ITT contribution. Fascist achievements "have been obscured by a deep recession and by the harsh austerity measures"—industrial output fell marginally under Allende, whereas the index went from 113 to 78 under the junta. Apologetics can hardly be more crass and incompetent. The important point, though, is that a magazine that represents "enlightened" U.S. business interests displays such unqualified enthusiasm for Third World fascism, based clearly on its favorable impact on U.S. business. Any adverse effects on the majority of the population are completely irrelevant.

There is also a convergence of economic and military-strategic interests in support of Third World fascism, as the military juntas in charge usually have a client relationship to

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the U.S. military establishment, are cooperative on U.S. bases, and specialize in the cleaning up of any subversives and protestors who challenge the satellite relationship. The military-strategic interest may have some small degree of autonomy of its own, but the size, role, and global spread of the U.S. military establishment cannot be explained with any degree of plausibility except as derivative from a global economic interest which is well understood by the strategists of "containment." Thus both economic and strategic interests have produced a natural alliance with military juntas and elite remnants of the old colonial order. These elements have had to rely on force to preserve power, and they have also had a strong propensity to feather their own nests by means of both graft and simple exploitation of the underlying population, in collusion with their foreign sponsor.

There is a close relationship between the terror employed in Brazil, Chile, and other client fascisms and their economic policies. Special tax privileges to foreign business and dependence on foreign investment for economic growth are not easy to achieve under a democratic order in this era of Third World nationalism. Neither is control over wages and the banning of strikes and other actions that disturb a "favorable investment climate." A persistent characteristic of neo-colonialism is the preservation of labor as a cheap commodity. In the Philippines, real wages have declined sharply for both rural and urban workers, and in "an era of rising commodity prices, labor remains the cheap component. . . . Manila remains one of the few capitals of the world where a taxi ride from the airport to the center of the city costs less than a dollar with tip."[10] This cheap labor is not a result of the operation of a "free market." In the Philippines, as in Brazil and Chile, the forces of supply and demand are not allowed to work without constraint—wages have been controlled by government fiat, and such controls have been used to keep profits up and Brazilian and Chilean goods "competitive."

It is hardly any wonder, then, that the Brazilian "economic miracle" has made the rich richer and a large proportion of the poorer members of the population *absolutely* as well as relatively poorer. The relative share of the richest 5 per-

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cent increased from 29 percent in 1960 to 38 percent in 1970; the real income of the lowest 40 percent of income-receiving units fell absolutely during the same decade. *Business Week* reported (April 28, 1975) that the real wages of the lowest *80* percent of the Brazilian population "have been steadily dropping since 1964—the year the generals took over—despite a tripling of the gross national product to $80 billion. In 1971, 65 percent of Brazil's economically active population subsisted on a monthly income of $60 or less; only 1 percent earned $350 per month and over, but many of these earned $5,000 a month or more. In entire provinces of Brazil the average income is under 10 percent of that of other provinces.

Just as in Thieu's South Vietnam, so in Brazil very high quality medical service is available in the larger cities for the upper 5 percent of income-receiving units, but negligible medical resources are available in the countryside. Vastly more resources are applied to the police than to medical research and facilities, although "Northeast Brazil, whose 35 million residents form the greatest concentration of poverty in Latin America, is a virtual human laboratory of third world ailments."[11] The Ministry of Health's share of the national budget fell from 4.29 percent in 1966 to 0.99 percent in 1974. Clearly the new Brazil, so pleasing to *Business Week* and the U.S. business community, is not exactly a welfare state. The large majority of the population is a means, not an end—in the same class as pack animals, only more dangerous, needing doses of terror to maintain "stability." Terror keeps the neo-colonial elites in power and the investment skies sunny. The victims are numerous, but can be disregarded because of their remoteness and passivity. If necessary we can blame them for their own laziness and excessive production of offspring.

The Dominican Republic: U.S. Model for Third World Development

In his *Stages of Economic Growth,* Walt W. Rostow describes a development process for Third World countries that come into our orbit: they become gradually like *us,* with advanced industrial technologies and democratic institutions. The Dominican Republic offers an earthy illustration of the reality

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of development processes under U.S. auspices. It is an especially apt and relevant case for this reason: with and after the invasion of 1965 the United States reasserted effective control over that small country and has since thoroughly dominated its politics and economics. Given the absence of any threatening counterforces, we can say that in the Dominican Republic, as nowhere else in the Third World, the flow of events must have been in conformity with the desires of the U.S. foreign policy leadership.

It will be recalled that the United States invaded the Dominican Republic in 1965 to prevent the displacement of the relatively benign fascist regime of Donald Reid Cabral by the Constitutionalists of Juan Bosch, who had been overthrown by a military coup in 1963 without eliciting any U.S. intervention to save *him* and his brief experiment in democratic government. The rationalizations by Lyndon Johnson and his spokesmen, alleging an imminent threat of communism, have been convincingly shown by Theodore Draper and others to be a hypocritical cover for a positive preference for fascism over a less reliable and less controllable democratic reformist government.[12] The invasion of 1965 re-established a firm U.S. grip on the island. As Bosch put it in June 1975, "This country is not pro-American, it is American, it is United States property."[13] What then have been the main characteristics of the Dominican model of Third World development, as seen in a country under close U.S. surveillance and control?

The first characteristic is extensive and systematic terror. In the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, and Brazil, three client fascisms that came into being with explicit U.S. connivance, by a strange coincidence paramilitary death squads quickly made their appearance and went on rampages against political dissenters, petty criminals, and sometimes purely arbitrary victims. Amnesty International reported on the Dominican Republic: "In 1970 it was alleged that there was one death or 'disappearance' every 34 hours." In July 1971 Norman Gall claimed that in the post-1965 era political murder in the Dominican Republic exceeded that of any comparable period under Trujillo. Gall noted further that "The Santo Domingo newspaper *El Nacional* last December 30 filled a page and a half

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of newsprint with the details of 186 political murders and thirty disappearances during 1970. The Dominican terror resembles the current wave of political killings in Guatemala . . . in that the paramilitary death squads are organized by the armed forces and police, which in both cases over the years have been given heavy U.S. material and advisory support." Gall went on to note that the essential function of political terror in the Dominican Republic has been to control the slum population, "which was the main force that defeated the Dominican military in the 1965 revolution."[14]

The *Wall Street Journal* reported on September 9, 1971, that "The conservative Catholic Church hierarchy has condemned the 'institutionalization' of terror." The *Journal* also claimed that the opinion was widespread in the Dominican Republic that the United States was behind the paramilitary death squads. Whether or not this specific allegation was true, the *Journal* reported that "the Embassy has done nothing publicly to dissociate itself from the terror. The United States continues to provide substantial aid, training, equipment and arms, to the Dominican police and army."

Since 1971 the rate of killing has slackened, but political assassinations continue on a steady basis. On March 7, 1975, Orlando Martinez, a journalist and critic of the regime, was gunned down near his home. The incarceration and torture of political prisoners also continues to play its role in maintaining stability. So does the steady outflow of dissidents who survive the death squads and tire of the struggle against a foreign-dominated police state.

In its March 1977 Human Rights Report to Congress, the State Department blandly observes that "The Dominican Republic does not have a tradition of political democracy." The report passes in silence from the era of Trujillo, who "left a legacy of brutality and contempt for human rights" when he was deposed in 1961, to "the present constitution of 1966," under which "the Dominican Republic is a representative democracy." Not a word about the American invasion of 1965 and its aftermath. While there were human rights violations in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the report concedes, nevertheless, "Observance of the right to life, liberty, and security of the

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person is generally respected in the Dominican Republic, except for persons suspected of engaging in violence or seeking the violent overthrow of the government. In such cases the legal rights of individuals apprehended are not always observed." Otherwise, too, things are looking up: "A broad spectrum of political parties and groups are allowed to hold meetings, assemblies, and demonstrations." The report fails to discuss *how* "broad" a spectrum of parties and opinions is tolerated, or what happens to those whose human rights are not observed. Nor does it describe the U.S. role under Trujillo, Bosch, Cabral, and in the post-1965 era of continued regrettable violations of human rights.

A second characteristic of the Dominican Republic model is widespread venality. Alan Riding writes in the *New York Times* (June 6, 1975) that "the blatant corruption of military and civilian sectors of the government is spreading bitterness among the urban masses, whose wages have been held down despite high inflation rates since 1966." The military and police in this client state are large and well taken care of. Alan Riding reports that one method whereby Balaguer retains control is "by openly allowing senior officers to enrich themselves. With official salaries of $700 a month, for example, most of the country's 37 generals live in huge modern houses, drive limousines, and own cattle ranches."

A recent 8-K report to the Securities and Exchange Commission by Philip Morris shows: (1) a $16,000 payment to a Dominican tax official for a favorable tax ruling; (2) the payment of $120,000 to various Dominican legislators for passage of a law that would give Philip Morris a privileged position in the Virginia tobacco line; and (3) monthly payments of $1,000 by Philip Morris to Juan Balaguer himself. The president of a presumably independent state taking payoffs from a private foreign business firm would seem rather sensational, but this passed virtually unnoticed in the United States. U.S. firms get business done not only by payoffs but by putting important people on their payrolls and by building both personal and financial ties to the ruling elite. Thus the brother of the important Director of Tourism is a vice-president of Gulf & Western's sugar-producing subsidiary in the Dominican Republic.

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A potential competitor to Gulf & Western's large seaside resort at La Romana, M. Wayne Fuller, has run into a steady series of obstacles from the Tourism Office in importing supplies and obtaining tax concessions supposedly available to foreign enterprises. In April 1975, a government decree was signed expropriating Fuller's beach land property—for use as a public park—helped along possibly by the fact that the president of another G & W subsidiary was an adviser to the Dominican Republic Park Commission. This decree was rescinded when Fuller mobilized *his* forces, including various army officers and Balaguer himself.[15] In brief, foreign interests are exceedingly powerful as they curry and buy favor and mobilize their elite cadres, with whom they jointly dominate and loot this small dependency.

A third characteristic of the Dominican model has been a radical sweetening of conditions for foreign business and a strong reliance on foreign investment for national development. As in Greece under the Colonels' regime of 1967-1973, great stress has been placed on tourism and investments related to tourism (foreign hotels, airport development). An Investment Incentives Law of 1968 removed any restrictions on foreign ownership, extended generous tax and duty exemptions to new investments, and guaranteed capital and profit repatriation. U.S. companies have swarmed into agriculture, food processing, mining, banking, and hotel and resort complexes. Gulf & Western is the largest landowner and employer in the country, with over 10 percent of all the arable land, mainly in sugar, and with a large resort complex. The conglomerate also serves as private manager of a large tax-free zone adjacent to G & W's Cajuiles golf course. One of the many Dominican Republic ads in the *New York Times*—funded in good part by "contributions" from foreign companies in the country—notes that companies settling within the G & W free zone "are given special duty free import and export privileges. They are granted a 10-year tax-free status."

A fourth characteristic of the Dominican model, closely related to the preceding, is effective government pacification of the labor force, a crucial requirement for an appropriate "climate of investment." As noted above, the systematic police ter-

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ror since 1965 has returned the large urban proletariat and sub-proletariat to the desired state of passivity, and the countryside has been more easily kept in line by periodic violence and threats. The Dominican Republic advertisement section in the *New York Times* of January 28, 1973, has a heading entitled "Industrialists Dream of Chances Like These," featuring the *low*, low wage rates, running between 25 and 50 cents an hour. The ad stresses the role of the *law* in fixing hours and wages and allowing the free import of foreign technicians. There is no mention of any trade unions, but employers will properly read between the lines that unions have been broken and pacified (with the assistance of George Meany and the AFL-CIO). Of special interest is the regular use of government troops and police to break up independent unions. The agricultural union *Sindicato Unido,* which operated the G & W fields, was broken by police action in 1966 and 1967, and a number of its leaders, including the union lawyer Guido Gil were arrested and killed by the forces of law and order. Another major foreign enterprise, Falconbridge Nickel, also successfully broke a union with army and police assistance in 1970. A *Wall Street Journal* report of September 9, 1971, states that "When a union attempted to organize construction workers at a foreign-owned ferronickel mill project last year, Mr. Balaguer sent in the army to help straighten things out. While the soldiers kept order, the contractors fired 32 allegedly leftist leaders. . . . The strike was broken in eight days." On the matter of labor unions, the State Department Human Rights Report has the following "information": "Labor unions are permitted to function and numerous labor unions exist, including some associated with opposition parties, but under some government controls." That is all.

In containing unions and rendering them docile the Dominican elite has had the steadfast support of the AFL-CIO, which has long cooperated closely with the CIA and international business firms in this unsavory operation. Its arm, CONATRAL, actually helped destroy the pro-labor Bosch regime in 1963 and has steadily supported its totalitarian and anti-labor successors. Presumably their blind hatred of communism and radicalism in general has led Meany and his close followers

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to sell out systematically the interests of labor in the Dominican Republic and in other U.S. satellites. Meany and some other labor bosses actually have a more direct interest in the pacification of labor in the Dominican Republic. Meany, his number two man Lane Kirkland, Alexander Barkan, director of COPE, the AFL-CIO political arm, and Edward J. Carlough, president of the sheet metal workers, are all stockholders in the 15,000 acre Punta Cana resort and plantation in the Dominican Republic. In order to clear the ground for this enterprise designed for the Beautiful People, a large number of squatters were evicted by the army.[16]

A fifth characteristic of the Dominican model, following naturally from the preceding, is the sharp deterioration in the well-being of the bulk of the population. In serving the interests of a traditional and expatriate elite, the Dominican Republic has been turned into a tourist and industrial paradise, with a "25-cent-minimum wage rate and hard-working peaceful labor" [sic: translated, no threat of strikes from any independent unions], and with four tax-free zones "filled with manufacturers of brushes, brassieres, batteries, electronic devices, wigs, undergarments, components, and consumer goods."[17] The effect of the 1965 counter-revolution and installation of the Dominican model on income distribution and welfare is summarized by the *Wall Street Journal* (September 9, 1971) as follows:

> The middle and upper classes are better off, as are the lower classes lucky enough to have jobs. But work is scarce; the poor are poorer and more numerous. "Per capita income is about the same as before 1965, but it's less equitably distributed," a foreign economic expert says. He estimates per-capita income at $240—three times that of Haiti but half that of Cuba. . . . Most of the 370 young women who work at La Romana earn 30 cents to 40 cents an hour, whereas wages in Puero Rico have soared in recent years; factory workers there averaged $1.73 an hour last year. . . . Malnutrition is widespread. Says George B. Mathues, director of CARE in the Dominican Republic: "You see kids with swollen bellies all over the country, even here in Santo Domingo." Food production is hampered by semi-feudal land tenure. At last count, less than 1 percent of the farmers owned 47.5 percent of the land, while 82 percent farmed fewer than 10 acres. . . . Land reform has moved with glacial speed. . . . Most Dominican children don't go beyond the third grade; only one in five reaches the sixth grade.

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These effects, and the cultural degradation of the Dominican Republic, are obviously beside the point. "Stability" has been brought to the country, and from the perspective of U.S. investment opportunities, the Dominican Republic deserves the glowing description of a U.S. Embassy report describing it as a "little Brazil" and "one of the brightest spots in Latin America."

The New Human Rights Movement— Only Victims East of the Elbe Need Apply

As even this brief review indicates, in the post-Second World War era the "Washington connection" has been strongly correlated with the proliferation of regimes of terror and oppression. The linkage arises out of the significant positive relationship between client fascism and a "favorable investment climate" and the long-standing predominance of investment criteria over human rights considerations. Under "conservative" administrations, the United States supports client fascism aggressively and with little bother for the public relations aspects of human rights issues. Under "liberal" auspices, the United States supports fascism, but then sometimes urges its leaders to give it a more human face. The basic supportive relationship persists without marked real differences in either case.

Despite this linkage, the people who brought us tiger cages, Provincial Interrogation Centers, saturation bombings as a device to "urbanize" South Vietnam, death squads, and military juntas, and their spokesmen and apologists in the mass media and academia, are once again deeply concerned with human rights—but almost exclusively in the Soviet Union and the countries friendly to it. Anthony Lewis explains this apparent bias as a consequence of the fact that "The afflicted individuals are enough like us so that we identify with them—and because their stories are often such nightmares of cruelty." The likeness hypothesis may have an element of truth; the endless suffering of peasants and slum dwellers rarely elicits from the privileged more than an occasional clucking of tongues or a remark on the cruelty of fate. But the hypothesis is still difficult to sustain. Chiang Kai-shek was not very much "like us," but we had

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little trouble "identifying with him," or so the actions of our democratic government would indicate. The numerous murdered and tortured intellectuals of Uruguay, Argentina, and Chile include many who are much more "like" American writers than Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov, but their brutalized bodies rarely make it to the *Times* or the *Post*. As for "nightmares of cruelty," there is an endless supply that could be culled from just Indonesia and East Timor if anyone with dependable access to the media were interested. People are dying today throughout Indochina from the starvation, disease, and unexploded ordnance that are one small part of the legacy of the American war, but the new advocates of human rights seem to have little concern. There is not a whisper of protest in the press when the president states that we owe the people of Vietnam no debt and have no responsibility to rebuild what we have destroyed because "the destruction was mutual," no less. And even those segments of the press that turned against the war in its later stages, by the time rational imperialists had come to realize that the game was not worth the candle, are scandalized at the idea that anyone should speak of "reparations" for what the United States has done to Indochina. Nor do they protest when the United States goes so far as to deny aid under the Food for Peace program even to countries that trade with Vietnam. Their new moralism is imperial politics, with a vengeance.

Another explanation plus defense of the heavy focus on civil rights east of the Elbe is the difficulty and danger of criticizing friendly powers. No problems arise when we condemn a hostile state, but matters are different when we make disapproving noises about allies and clients. We "destabilize" Allende's democratic Chile, not Pinochet's fascist Chile; on the contrary, the latter merits our humanitarian support. This "explanation" contains a germ of truth, but it is still fundamentally misleading. It ignores the question of how these little tyrannies came into being in the first place, and why so many clients of our choice are venal and torture prone. It slides by the fact that we have a positive interest in client fascism—and that terror plays a role both in preserving the rule of our favored elites and in facilitating the policies that delight Gulf & Western. This supportive role to friendly terror, and the fact that "de-

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stabilization" is frequently applied to nonterror regimes in favor of terror-to-come, again reveals the utter hypocrisy of the new East-of-the-Elbe Civil Rights Movement. Just how seriously is one to take the protestations of George Meany and Henry Jackson, powerful and vocal spokesmen for Soviet civil rights, who either ignore or actively support terror throughout the U.S. sphere of influence? What concerns these civil libertarians-at-a-distance is not human rights, but the benefits they perceive in a breakdown of detente, an accelerated arms race, and the renewal of an aggressive cold war posture. All of this may indeed result in increased repression in the state socialist societies that are the declared enemy, but that is hardly likely to bother the Meanys and the Jacksons, as their record of support for terror and oppression within the sphere of American power indicates.

The linkage between American power and severe human rights violations is systematic, not accidental. The American defeat in Indochina, though of great significance, led to no institutional changes within the United States. Even the doctrinal system, bruised when the murderous violence of the American aggression could no longer be suppressed, has quickly been restored, with the aid of the ideological institutions: the mass media, the academic professions, the schools, the journals of opinion. It is sheer romanticism to expect, under these circumstances, that a sudden concern for human rights might significantly influence the foreign policy of the United States. To some extent this new concern may reflect genuine beliefs on the part of individuals who have absorbed the more humane elements of Western ideology. But the underlying forces that have given precedence to "investment climate" for many decades still determine the broad sweep of policy. Genuine moralists in power find "business confidence" sagging when they push too far in humanistic directions,[18] even verbally. Whatever their real aims, their discretion is sharply limited.

Thus far, in fact, the Carter human rights campaign—mainly one of words rather than deeds, in any case—has been relatively strong on Soviet violations of civil rights and weak or nonexistent on human rights in U.S. client states. Carter has written to Sakharov and received Bukovsky in person, but he has not communicated with Mrs. Allende. His campaign has

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had an impact on Soviet attitudes, but not those pertaining to human rights; rather, it has added to Soviet suspicions of U.S. interest in controlling the arms race. Carter's mobilization of power in Congress has not been sufficient to prevent the conservative House from voting against aid to Cuba, Vietnam, Mozambique, and several other exclusively left-oriented states, while preserving it intact for client fascism. Thus, whatever Carter's real intentions, his human rights movement thus far has worked out in practice to exacerbate cold war tensions and affect minimally human rights in areas under United States influence.

But while the new moralism is not likely to have a large impact on human rights, it may well be effective as an instrument of propaganda. After the horrors of Indochina, some dramatic initiatives were needed to reconstruct the image of American benevolence that has proven so useful a device to achieve conformism and obedience in this highly indoctrinated society. These results obtained, the United States will be able to return to the "activist" foreign policy that is essential for preserving the global interests of American capitalism.

Still, in spite of these facts, there may be some marginal gains to human rights from the new propaganda offensive. The expressed concern for human rights may offer opportunities for people who are genuinely interested in the issue. They can exploit the new rhetoric, and should, to try to alleviate the suffering and oppression of the victims of terroristic states, and may even be able to enlist some support from political forces in the United States, when this is not unduly expensive—which is perhaps more than one could hope during the past three decades. But it is hardly reasonable to expect that the recent discovery of human rights violations will offset the systematic factors that impel the United States to impose and support client fascism, factors based on powerful and compelling economic interests that have in no way been diminished by recent developments, domestic or international.

NOTES

1. *Security Agreements and Commitments Abroad.* Report to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, December 21, 1970, p. 3.

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2. *Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders,* Interim Report of Select Senate Committee on Intelligence Activities, November 20, 1975, pp. 71-109.
3. Drew Fethersten and John Cummings, "Canadian Says US Paid Him $5,000 to Infect Cuban Poultry," *Washington Post,* March 21, 1977, p. A 18; this report states that "The major details of the Canadian's story have been confirmed by sources within and outside the American intelligence community." The pig-killing episode is described in *Newsday,* January 9, 1977.
4. "Terror—Argentine Style," *Matchbox,* Winter 1977, p. 1; Jeffrey A. Tannenbaum, "The Terrorists: For World's Alienated, Violence Often Reaps Political Recognition," *Wall Street Journal,* January 4, 1977, p. 1.
5. See "Rightist Terror Stirs Argentina," August 29, 1976, and "Argentina's Terror: Army Is Ahead," January 2, 1977.
6. Three-year comparisons were used except where data were unavailable or other political events intervened to require a two-year horizon.
7. Some of these problems are not discussed here for lack of space. One is the overall trend factor—if aid is going up in general, avoidance of bias may require deflating to the trend line. Such an adjustment does not alter the findings presented here.
8. The origination, funding, and staffing of these institutions provide even more definitive evidence of U.S. dominance. See Teresa Hayter, *Aid As Imperialism* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1971); Michael Tanzer, *The Political Economy of International Oil and the Underdeveloped Countries* (Boston: Beacon, 1969), chapter 8.
9. *American Banker,* November 28, 1975, p. 13.
10. Henry Kamm, "Philippine Democracy, an American Legacy, Has Crumbled," *New York Times,* March 1, 1977, p. 2.
11. Marvine Howe, "Brazil's Inflation Said to Halve Real Income of Poor in Decade," *New York Times,* December 14, 1974.
12. Theodore Draper, "The Dominican Crisis: A Case Study in American Policy," *Commentary,* December 1965; Jerome Slater, *The United States and the Dominican Revolution* (New York: Harper and Row, 1971).
13. Alan Riding, "Balaguer and His Firm Ally, the U.S., Are Targets of Dominican Unrest," *New York Times,* June 6, 1975.
14. Norman Gall, "Santo Domingo: The Politics of Terror," *New York Review of Books,* July 22, 1971.
15. Stanley Penn, "Angry Investor Thinks Gulf & Western Is Trying to Block His Dominican Resort," *Wall Street Journal,* June 1, 1976.
16. Jonathan Kwitny, "Strange Bedfellows From Labor, Business Own Dominican Resort," *Wall Street Journal,* May 25, 1973.
17. *Wall Street Journal,* January 25, 1974, p. 9.
18. See Fred Block, "The Ruling Class Does Not Rule: Notes on the Marxist Theory of the State," *Socialist Revolution,* May-June 1977, pp. 6-28.

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REVOLUTION IN ETHIOPIA

BY AN OBSERVER

Monday was a strange day in Addis Ababa. People talked quietly with friends, trying to piece together what had happened over the weekend. On Friday morning, April 29, virtually everyone in different parts of this city of one million had heard heavy gunfire. Not the light, sporadic rifle fire that is common after 11:30 P.M., when the midnight curfew is announced prematurely, but a heavier machine-gun sound at 6:30 P.M. Most people had heard that there was a student demonstration which had been suppressed with gunfire with some loss of life. Only gradually did people begin to comprehend that the demonstrations had been widespread (perhaps in a dozen places). The army—actually it was not the army, but a specially trained branch called the "flame," recruited from impoverished, unemployed illiterate lumpen immigrants in the city, prone to follow any order—responded rapidly with jeeps. Mounted on the backs of the jeeps were heavy machine guns. Sitting behind the machine guns were soldiers wearing yellow goggles, symbolically separating them from their countrymen. At each demonstration the begoggled machine gunners let loose, cutting down dozens of teenagers, demonstrators as well as shoppers, people

The author spent considerable time in Ethiopia in recent months.

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going to night school, walking home from work, or on the street for any reason. At a few places the demonstrators shot back, but for the most part they were unarmed.

Over the weekend people began to count the caskets at church funerals and to count the new hospital admissions. By Monday the city was numb with disbelief. In ten minutes probably three hundred youngsters, mostly unarmed, had been killed and several hundred more had been wounded by heavily armed troops. (These figures were rumors which could be traced to a police department report.) The next day many hundred (one rumor said six hundred) who had been arrested were taken out of jail and summarily executed. Altogether at least nine hundred were killed, and some rumors had the figure as high as twenty-four hundred.* Reportedly, parents had to pay a fee to reclaim the bodies of their children—several dollars per bullet.

No one could understand how the disaster happened. Why did students demonstrate when they knew the dangers? How could soldiers machine-gun unarmed teenagers? Ethiopia is in the midst of a complex and profound revolution in which violent struggle is inevitable. The revolution expresses cultural, economic, and political tensions which have their roots deep in Ethiopia's history.

Although Ethiopia had remained independent from European colonial rule, it was also very poor. Internal colonialism was devastating, economically. At the turn of the century the Emperor Menelik was partially inspired by the expansion of European power in Africa. Feeling that if European kings could conquer parts of Africa so could he, he expanded his Shoan kingdom, which represented a coalition between some Amhara and some Galla (Oromo) peoples, southward and toward the lowland fringes of the present borders, conquering Galla, Afar, Somali, and other peoples, often Muslims. The Emperor seized his new subjects' lands and gave them to key military supporters, who collected rent. Thus was established a feudal elite in which top men in the military and bureaucracy also held huge blocks of land. The class system also comprised

* To the memory of one person in particular this article is dedicated.

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a degree of ethnic conflict, as the elite was generally Amharic and Coptic Christian, and the people paying rents and tributes were from other ethnic groups, often Muslim. Haile Selassie's firm rule from 1930 to 1974 consolidated this system and kept the diverse groups and regions in a single polity, but was never able to mold them into a unified nation.

This feudal system had important negative economic consequences. Farmers renting land feared that if they produced more crops their rent would be raised or they would be evicted in favor of new tenants who offered more rent. They saw no reason to invest in improving soil fertility or in soil and water conservation practices. Forests were cut down with abandon, and soil erosion became a major problem. In northern Ethiopia tenancy was not a problem, but different social practices brought similar results. Farm land was owned by a whole tribe, and tribal elders could assign and reassign the land to different families. The system resulted in a high degree of equity, but also had a high level of insecurity. A farmer would not invest in erosion control practices if he feared the tribal elders would reassign his land to someone else. Throughout the highlands farmers tried to grow as little as needed for survival, because any surpluses might attract the rent or tax collector, or some general looking for provisions for his army.

As the population expanded, as soil fertility declined, as erosion increased, as cattle overgrazed pasture lands, Ethiopia sank deeper and deeper into poverty. The established social institutions blocked all ways of breaking out of this descending spiral. In the 1960s life expectancy was only 38.5 years, and infant mortality was almost 200 per thousand live births. People's nutritional level was generally below minimal requirements, and when drought struck in 1972 in the northern regions, perhaps as many as 200,000 people died. At that time Ethiopia's feudal elite simply denied the existence of famine and continued exporting food to get foreign exchange with which to buy luxury consumer goods. The government's failure to respond to the famine crystallized in many people's minds the need for revolution in Ethiopia.

The old government tried some rural development programs, but generally most of the benefits went to the rural elite.

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They bought tractors and evicted tenants; agricultural development brought disaster to many poor farmers. Everyone knew the first step in development was land reform, but the rural elite blocked implementation of the toothless laws which were passed.

One of the first steps of the revolution was to destroy this land-owning elite by land reform. Some old elite members have been shot or imprisoned, but most have left the countryside and have escaped to provincial cities or to Addis Ababa. A few have left the country.

If the losers in the Ethiopian revolution are easily identified, the victors are far more amorphous. To a large extent the revolution is led by intellectuals who have studied abroad —in Europe and the United States. Some in France were close to the Communist Party of France and through it to the Soviet Union. A similar radicalization was experienced by the thousands of Ethiopians who studied in the United States. In the early 1950s some of them were told to find a seat at the back of a bus or were not served food at the restaurants on the highway to Washington. Some of them joined U.S. students in the radical anti-war movement of the 1960s. Their radicalism deepened and embraced Marxism and the experiences of Socialist countries, particularly China. When the junior officers of the army seized power and shot their senior officers in 1974, these Marxist intellectuals came in to advise the military (by establishing what is loosely called the politbureau) and to staff the government ministries.

There were virtually no countervailing forces. The bourgeoisie had not been able to develop in this feudal agricultural country with little manufacturing or commerce. The proletariat was tiny and the peasants were unorganized and concerned with their immediate need for land.

The Ethiopian revolutionaries took power over a period of several months in 1974. There was no protracted guerrilla struggle. There was no leading party or other organization that had the chance to learn from its own errors, to train and discipline its cadres, to develop a firm mass base by reflecting the needs of the masses, or to develop insightful, charismatic leaders.

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The government is guided by lower-class military people and by radical intellectuals, and is developing exciting revolutionary programs under the general slogan of opposing feudalism, imperialism, and bureaucratic capitalism. Land reform has been carried out (after years of nonimplementation), holdings larger than twenty-five acres having been expropriated without compensation. Middle and rich peasants, with fifteen to twenty-five acres were not affected by the land reform. However, the feudal lords with hundreds and thousands of acres were eliminated, and with them went their political control of the countryside. The land expropriated from the larger landowners was distributed to landless laborers, tenants, and small holders. There still remain large differences between the poor and well-to-do farmers, but the gigantic differences between rich and poor, between powerful and powerless, have been reduced considerably. The former tenants no longer have the crushing burden of turning over one-half their crop as rent to the landlord.

In regions where tribal elders had assigned land-use rights, and in which farmers had spent much of their time arguing for more land (or to retain their land) in tribal courts, the rights to land use have been made more permanent. Throughout the country the government is setting up peasant associations which will be able to organize people and resources to distribute fertilizer, improved seeds, and credit, and to begin the massive job of soil and water conservation that will be essential for Ethiopia's future. The peasant associations are also being organized into marketing cooperatives to assure that merchants do not end up with the gains from land reform. In the long run, the peasant associations may become collective production units.

Especially in regions where there were high rates of tenancy, there is a mood of joyous optimism. Exploitation has been ended, and local militias have been set up to protect the land. For the first time the farmers see reasons to make the long-term investments in soil fertility and erosion control that are so necessary.

In addition, ambitious plans are underway to provide primary education and basic health care to everyone in the country within ten years. Agricultural science and extension

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are receiving major inputs. New roads are being built so that the rural areas, dependent on donkey and mule for transportation, can have improved access to markets and services. The government is making efforts to break down the professionalism that prevents teachers, health workers, or agricultural scientists from truly serving rural needs. Local Revolution and Development Committees are being established to control, eventually, the development activities in each locality, and to break down the ancient tradition of centralized bureaucracy.

Women's associations are now being set up and are establishing local shops and mills. The associations also give women an opportunity to get out of the house, meet each other, and pool their experiences and power. Physical oppression of women has declined. Many men are less than enthusiastic about new roles for their wives and have tried to block these changes, sometimes with physical force. At the same time, however, many men understand the potential benefits to themselves from new roles for women.

In the past, although the rural areas had 95 percent of the population, they received almost none of the government's expenditures—except for roads, which were used to impose order, facilitate tax collection, and market agricultural crops. All these functions brought main benefits to the urban sector. Almost all government expenditures for health, education, and economic development were in the urban areas.

This pattern of government expenditures is now finally being redressed. Throughout the government ministries, one cannot fail to be inspired by the optimistic plans for a government which serves the people, and does not exploit them.

About most of these reforms there appears to be unity and enthusiasm. But there is also a bitter struggle within the revolution for leadership. Bitter factional struggle that took decades to crystallize in the Soviet Union and China has emerged in Ethiopia in scant months. It is this struggle which provides the background for the April 29 slaughter.

The ostensible issue is civilian rule. No sooner did the military seize power than student radicals called for civilian rule, for power to the people. The army replied that before power could be returned to civilians, it was necessary first to

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organize and educate the masses, particularly the peasants, to assure that civilian rule would not be dominated by an urban, educated elite. To guard against this, the army argued that a civilian administration should be dominated by a political party, such as a traditional communist party. The party, however, is just in the incipient stages of formation, and few cadres have been adequately trained. Thus the army argues that civilian administration should be delayed until the new communist party is powerful enough to guide the country.

While the country is being trained and organized for civilian administration, the military government wishes to consolidate political power. They believe that potentially independent forces (including intellectuals, trade unions, journalists, bureaucrats) must be eliminated and brought under party leadership, as happened in the Soviet Union in the early 1920s where independent trade unions and anarchist uprisings were crushed.

An opposition party, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP), quickly interpreted the military's position as meaning, in reality, indefinite military dictatorship under radical slogans. In a broad political sense, EPRP seems to have much the same political program as that of the government, and the literature of the EPRP is virtually indistinguishable from that of the government.

The cleavage has sociological or class foundations, but it also has an ethnic basis. To some extent, EPRP draws support from college and, more importantly, high school students. The students often come from families of the bourgeoisie or bureaucracy. They almost certainly are urban, if not from Addis Ababa then from the larger provincial market towns. EPRP is thought to have some support within some government ministries, and it also has some support from the working class and in some rural areas, particularly in the provinces of Tigre and Harage. To some extent the cleavage reflects a traditional antagonism between the military often drawn from the rural poor, and the intelligentsia largely from more privileged classes.

The ethnic dimension of the struggle is important too. Support for the government is strong in the southern Galla rural areas which had high tenancy rates and were the scene of

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radical land reform. The victims of land reform were often Amhara landlords. Class violence coincided with and reinforced ethnic rivalries. To some extent the government is beginning to be perceived as a Galla government, and many officials and military people are indeed from this ethnic group. The government is seen as breaking and redressing the Amharic domination of the south.

One story highlights the ethnic element of the conflict. Lieut. Col. Mengistu, leader of the government, and probably at least partly a Galla, visited a jail with the intention of releasing some EPRP student sympathizers. When he arrived, the students started chanting, using the traditional Amharic word for "slave." It had roughly the emotive context of "nigger" in the United States. Mengistu decided to leave the students in jail.

These differences in class and ethnic background are important but should not be overemphasized. In many cases present government officials, EPRP leaders, and leaders of other anti-government groups, were classmates together in Ethiopian schools or in the United States, and worked together closely for years in government offices. They have agreed on general political questions for years. To understand the bitterness of the cleavages, one has also to take account of the dynamics of political conflict. After the revolution, the military government sent almost all students over tenth grade to the countryside. (The students were required to go in order to get their diplomas or to attend school the next year.) The military government had several objectives in mind when it sent students to the countryside. From a political point of view, it probably wanted to get them out of Addis Ababa, where they could demonstrate and cause political problems. Equally important, the students could carry out land reform and set up peasant associations. Over 50,000 students went to the countryside and carried out a remarkable transformation. In just a few months the students (backed up with military support and technical help from the ministry of agriculture) achieved what the government bureaucracy had not done in years.

There were, however, some problems. In its haste to get students to the field, training programs were very superficial,

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considering the complexity of the task. Sometimes the radical students advocated collective agriculture and forced farmers to merge their land. In theory this could have worked well because the Ethiopian farmers have a long tradition of mutual aid and labor exchange, and do need some form of cooperation to develop soil and water conservation programs and to improve animal husbandry. But the students, romantically attracted to collectivization, were either unaware of the traditional patterns of cooperation or afraid that if they used them, the old leaders and patterns of exploitation would re-emerge. They forced farmers who did not have working relationships to farm together. Not surprisingly, the farmers quarrelled about dividing the harvest, and after one season decided to go back to private farming. The result was that the attempt to encourage collective farming was premature and adventurist, and had the final effect (if not intent) of undermining the government's legitimacy in rural areas, and of increasing centrifugal rebellious activities. The government has since stressed that collectivization of agriculture will be done on a voluntary basis and will take place sometime in the vague future.

Radical students also encouraged farmers to attack their landlords. In regions of high tenancy and high exploitation, farmers responded to these suggestions. But in the more egalitarian northern regions where traditional social leaders had widespread respect, farmers were not interested in attacking local leaders. On the contrary, they protected their leaders and attacked the students, sometimes fatally. Sometimes students told farmers that they did not have to repay debts. While the government did want to cancel debts to landlords, it certainly wanted the farmers to repay fertilizer loans which the government had made. Encouraged by student campaigners, however, many farmers refused to repay fertilizer loans. Radical students also tried to undermine the power of local police forces which the government needed to assure some stability. They advocated arming the peasants, which the government has been reluctant to do until recently.

Annoyed by ultra-leftist activities and eager to consolidate power totally, the military leaders began to retaliate by arresting and executing radical student leaders, sometimes under

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fabricated charges that they were helping landlords. In retaliation the radical students charged that the government was compromising with the forces of capitalism and reaction, and even began to assassinate neighborhood association leaders who were working with the military and energetically ferreting out EPRP supporters. Each week perhaps two or three chairmen of local neighborhood associations are killed, and occasionally a higher-level official is shot. Each killing aggravates the crisis, deepens the enmity, and calls forth retaliation. The killing grows from one plateau to another. Several dozen independent leftists were seized in the fall of 1976 and executed a few months later. In March 1977, local neighborhood associations and militia conducted house to house searches in the early hours of the morning (midnight to six o'clock in the morning) looking for EPRP supporters, presumably identified by the presence of leaflets, weapons, typewriters, and binoculars. Dozens were executed nightly—some for having leaflets, some by error, some to settle personal grudges. The killing was so rampant and senseless that the military leadership had to execute some local chairmen of neighborhood associations, whose excesses in carrying out personal grudges were particularly heinous.

As more people are killed, EPRP's charge that the government is a military dictatorship becomes increasingly a self-fulfilling prophesy. EPRP can challenge the revolutionary credentials of the government by asking whether a truly revolutionary government shoots youngsters. Did the Vietnamese liberation forces, or the Chinese army, or Fidel Castro's guerrilla forces ever machine-gun hundreds of unarmed teenagers? Thus as the carnage piles up, more and more people seem to question the legitimacy of the government. Whatever the actual leadership of EPRP, it probably is getting widespread support simply because of its opposition to a government that is shooting people. At night EPRP supporters continued painting slogans and distributing leaflets, dodging bullets, as they went. Militia continued to fire at them. At the university anti-government signs such as "Soviet Imperialists, Go Home!" continued to appear.

Then came Friday, April 29. EPRP apparently organized simultaneous demonstrations around the city. Did the military fear that this was designed to spark a mass uprising? Or did it

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fear that regardless of the plans, a mass uprising might be inspired? Or did it make a conscious decision to increase drastically the use of terror to frighten or physically eliminate independent radicalism? Does the government think that Stalin's terror of the 1930s and the use of heavy armor against demonstrators, as in the streets in Budapest (1956) and Prague (1968), are necessary to maintain socialist power?

But the actions of soldiers reflected not only deliberate terror tactics but also an uneasy fear and desperate resolve to prevent the disintegration of the country. In addition to the internal war in Addis Ababa, there are guerrilla movements on Ethiopia's periphery, which taken together threaten the essential dismemberment of the country. In the north, the province of Eritrea has been waging a long guerrilla war and by now has virtually seceded from Ethiopia. Rebellious movements are developing in nearby Tigre, Begendir, and Gojam, which have traditionally guarded their separateness within the Ethiopian empire. In these regions liberal democratic forces as well as reactionary and royalist forces, including former landlord elements and supporters of the traditional feudal imperial system, have been organizing themselves in an organization called Ethiopian Democratic Union (EDU). Especially if Eritrea becomes independent, there will be strong pressure for those northern regions to join it, as most of their trade goes north to Eritrean cities and ports.

In the last few months, it appears that the Eritrean forces (both ELF and EPLF) have joined with EDU and have been launching simultaneous attacks on several towns. This has given rise to fear on the part of the Ethiopian government that they are beginning to coordinate military tactics, despite political and ideological differences.

More seriously, these forces seem to be receiving military support from neighboring Sudan, which is currently being backed by Egypt and the United States. (In the past, when Ethiopia was perceived as a U.S. client, the Eritreans received support indirectly from the Soviet Union.) One reason for Sudan's support to these forces is that it is widely believed (in Sudan at least) that Ethiopia's revolutionary leadership joined Libya in the summer of 1976 in funding and training a group

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of people who attempted a left-wing coup against Sudan's Muslim ruler, Gaafar al-Nimeiry after he moved out from under Soviet tutelage and oriented Sudan toward the wealthy Arab states.

Ethiopia's leaders believe that the United States is giving support to Sudan, which in turn is supporting secessionist and counter-revolutionary movements in Ethiopia. In mid-April the United States promised to send Sudan six C-130 cargo planes and indicated that it would sell F-5 jet fighters. At roughly the same time Washington terminated future (after 1978) military grants to the Ethiopian army which had been equipped primarily with U.S. weapons.

Ethiopia's cash purchases—far larger than grants—were not immediately affected, but subsequently Ethiopia did ask the United States to remove all military operations from Ethiopia, including the Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG), a naval hospital, an obsolete communications base which previously had monitored Soviet and Middle Eastern military radio communication (until satellites collected the information more efficiently), and the U.S. Information Service. After the MAAG group left, Ethiopia could no longer buy spare parts for their U.S. arms, but the U.S. Embassy and Agency for International Development were not asked to leave, and continued activities almost without interruption.

For the United States, "tilting" toward Sudan and away from Ethiopia is a new political direction, at least partly motivated by an effort to improve relations with the Arab powers, including Saudi Arabia and Egypt, which requires supporting governments they support (Sudan) and helping their efforts to weaken revolutionary states in the region.

On the east, Ethiopia faces a different problem, with its own historic roots. The Ogaden region is inhabited by Somali people, mostly nomads, and they seem eager to join neighboring Somalia, or at least to have regional autonomy. The people in this region are mostly Somali nomads. Somali nationalism is strong, and with the bulk of the Ethiopian army tied down in Eritrea, Somali guerrillas and troops control most of eastern Ethiopia.

To the northeast, a crisis is brewing over the future of the

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soon-to-be independent French Somaliland, also called Afars and Issas, the capital of which is Djibouti. The dominant population in Afars and Issas is closely related to the Somalis, and it may invite (or tolerate) integration with Somalia. The issue is of great strategic significance since Djibouti is the port terminus for the only railroad that connects Addis Ababa to the sea. If Djibouti should join Somalia and if Eritrea gains independence, Ethiopia would be entirely landlocked.

Military leaders in Addis Ababa are growing desperate as they see the encirclement and disintegration of Ethiopia. Feeling that dismemberment is being supported by the Arab powers, and at least to some extent by the United States, they have decided to try to get extensive military and economic assistance from the Soviet Union. Some within the leadership feel close to the Soviet Union ideologically, and expect it to support the Ethiopian revolution as its international proletarian responsibility. Equally important, many of the Ethiopian leaders believe that only the Soviet Union has the economic capacity and political possibility of responding to their needs in a major way. Ethiopia's leader, Lieut. Col. Mengistu Haile Mariam, invited himself to the Soviet Union in early May to discuss possible aid, though reportedly the Soviet Union was not eager to receive him.

Many people in Ethiopia, including government officials, seem far more interested in Chinese-style socialism than in Soviet socialism. Many government officials subscribe to Chinese periodicals, and some government offices have on their bulletin boards articles from Chinese magazines. Ethiopia is trying to walk a very narrow line of orienting its domestic policies toward China's experience but leaning toward the Soviet Union in foreign affairs.

For its part, the Soviet Union seems to be responding favorably but hesitantly to Ethiopia's pleas. Giving aid to Ethiopia could endanger close relations with Somalia, where the Soviet Union is reported to have valuable naval bases. On the other hand, the Soviet Union may fear that Somalia could eventually move closer to Saudi Arabia, which has been offering considerable foreign aid. The Soviet Union and Cuba have tried, so far unsuccessfully, to negotiate some resolution of the issues involving Somalia and Eritrea.

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There seems no simple, quick solution to the tragic violence in Ethiopia, and more internal turmoil seems inevitable. At the moment the military is reasonably united, but there are many cleavages which could easily become inflamed. The council which coordinates the military government's affairs, the Provisional Military Administrative Council (called the PMAC or *dirgue*, Amharic for committee), has had serious divisions in the past which up to now have been resolved by palace shoot-outs. Originally the *dirgue* had about 150 members, but more than half have been killed by assassination or by shootings in the palace.

Secondly, there is rumored to be a serious split between the military *dirgue* and its political advisers, who tend to be more dogmatic Marxists, and who are commonly referred to as the "politbureau." (Its membership is also secret.) Some people interpret the newly armed militia and the provisional mass organization (an incipient communist party) to be the mechanisms through which the politbureau will attempt (and may in fact have tried already) to seize power from the *dirgue*.

A week after the slaughter of April 29-30, house searches were carried out again; and according to one rumor the military units responsible disarmed and arrested the "flame," the special military unit close to Mengistu which had carried out the massacre. That Sunday evening there was a major battle in Addis Ababa, and heavy machine guns and tanks were brought into the streets. The *dirgue* had located and attacked two former members who had quit and gone into opposition.

Already perhaps 30,000 people have been killed in the internal violence. In historical perspective, the number of deaths is perhaps not great, not at least compared to the number of people who have died in famines in Ethiopia. In human terms, however, Ethiopia's loss is great; and from the point of view of economic development it is a grievous loss, as the economy desperately needs the educated men and women who are being killed off.

The partial breakup of Ethiopia seems likely, and this may have widespread repercussions in the rest of Africa where virtually every state has ethnic and/or religious cleavages similar to those in Ethiopia. Tragically and probably deliberately the

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United States, which professes to be so concerned about the territorial integrity of Zaire, seems to be contributing to the disintegration of the Ethiopian state and the destruction of its socialist experiment.

Even if major areas should break away from Ethiopia, however, the core of the traditional Ethiopian highlands would remain a country with a large population and despite tensions between Amhara and Galla, the two peoples are so intertwined that a partition would be exceedingly difficult.

Radical Ethiopians fear that as their country moves to the left, the internal violence may be inflamed by external intervention. They feel that U.S. support for Sudan represents a new form of subtle, indirect intervention to block a further move to the left in Ethiopia. However distasteful it may be to receive Soviet aid, they see no other choice for the survival of their revolution.

In Ethiopia's unfolding tragedy there are no "good guys" and no "bad guys," no heroes and too many martyrs. Each faction has its good and bad, far too interrelated for clear-cut moralisms. Unfortunately, rational discussion to resolve the dispute seems futile. The Ethiopian intellectuals and politicians are very sophisticated and thoughtful; indeed, they may be too sophisticated. They are so certain they are correct and so committed to their perceptions that they are ready to kill and to sacrifice themselves for their respective causes.

In this situation, the best hope is that modern Ethiopia's birth pains will be mercifully brief, that intervention by Sudan and other powers can be ended, and that the hopes of so many Ethiopians for a more just and plentiful life will not die with the unfortunate victims of progress.

Rise like lions after slumber
In unvanquishable number.
Shake your chains to earth, like dew,
Which in sleep have fallen on you:
Ye are many, they are few.

—Percy Bysshe Shelley

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EXIT MRS. GANDHI

BY RUTH GLASS

For the time being, the Congress regime—and its detestable offshoot, emergency rule—have come to an end in India. By now, the first celebrations are over. However skeptical one might be—and there are plenty of reasons for skepticism—it is a rare delightful sight to see the insolence of office so soundly punished; to see the erstwhile prisoners get rid of their jailers; to watch the high and mighty digging their own graves. But, you will say, surely they are still around; replacements have been found; their apparatus of state power is not buried yet? Quite right. It is a twisted and contradictory tale. (And it seemed no less puzzling in close-up when I was in India recently, than it might seem from a distance.

It is, I think, an unprecedented story—full of riddles. The first question, in my view, is what exactly prompted Indira Gandhi—a strongly ensconced prime minister, despite some temporary setbacks—to fortify her position even more by de-

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claring an internal emergency on June 25, 1975? At that time she had the best of both her worlds—a democratic stage set for an autocratic play. Since she had then a two thirds majority—a rather docile majority—in her parliament (the Lok Sabha, the principal elected chamber) which had yet another year to run, she was capable of extending its lifetime, and of postponing elections, to suit her convenience; and also of adding further to the store of repressive legislation (such as MISA, the Maintenance of Internal Security Act, and DIR, the Defence of India Regulations) which already provided a charter for despotic rule. Moreover, the external emergency which had been decreed in early December 1971, prior to the Indian military intervention (*alias* the war of liberation) in Bangladesh (the then East Pakistan) was still in force. (It was eventually lifted by the new government after the recent elections.) Why then did Mrs. G. have to gild the lily by imposing the additional internal emergency edict, and so spoiling her genteel democratic posture?

Several explanations are offered. According to one popular version, the main motive for resorting to emergency rule was Mrs. Gandhi's own personal vulnerability in June 1975 while she was awaiting the Supreme Court verdict on her conviction by a lower court in Allahabad for a minor technical malpractice during the previous (1971) election. (At that time, her party had also suffered some losses, though still rather moderate ones, in state assembly elections in Gujarat.) It is thought that in these specific circumstances the emergency was devised by Mrs. Gandhi primarily as a means of self-protection so as to avoid a challenge to her authority, and possible defections from the Congress ranks.[1]* And no doubt the emergency with all its trimmings—abandonment of the formalities of civil rights, of *habeas corpus,* imposition of press censorship and the like—was in fact used to confer legal immunity on the prime minister and her allies, and to give them complete sanction for the suppression of their actual or alleged opponents.

Even so, although the emergency apparatus was certainly helpful, in the short run, in shielding Mrs. Gandhi against any political risks which the aftermath of the Allahabad judgment

* Notes will be found at the end of the article.

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might have produced for her, it could hardly have been conceived and established primarily for this specific purpose. It was a sledge hammer to crack that particular nut—rather unnecessary in a situation in which other means were available for such a task, and while Indira Gandhi's charisma throughout the country was still powerful. Moreover, the emergency was evidently not a hastily improvised device, but one which had been planned (if not very efficiently) for some time, long before the Allahabad decision was, or could have been, anticipated. Well in advance, Mrs. G. started to make a series of speeches in which she provided fictitious alibis for an impending dictatorial rule—the same alibis which she constantly repeated in the same petulant tone, with dreary monotony, throughout the actual emergency period, right up to the moment of countdown on March 20th this year. Her standard text, delivered almost word-perfect in her speeches and interviews day after day, was a string of warnings about the evil conspiracies of internal and unnamed external aggressors, coupled with laments upon the later-so-familiar "liberty has been turned into license" theme, leading to a demand for "discipline." So already several months before the emergency was declared, it could be expected that some kind of draconian coup was in the offing. When it came, the main surprise was (to those who had anticipated such a turn) that the emergency was decreed, quite brazenly, without even a semblance of justification or provocation—without bothering even to simulate a border incident or a Reichstag fire. The manner of its inception was a cocksure and blatantly arrogant introduction to that arrogant regime.

In one way, therefore, the declaration of the emergency, while not unexpected, was and is still difficult to understand. It did not make much sense on rational grounds in the domestic Indian context (apart from being, perhaps, of some convenience from the Soviet point of view). Nor would it suffice to attribute it mainly to the political paranoia of the *dramatis personae,* though that is not a negligible affliction in this case. In terms of the self-interest of Mrs. Gandhi's personal position, of her government and of her class, the institution of the emergency was an unnecessary and a risky step—especially in a milieu in which the trappings of democratic legitimacy are profitable and

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respectable. (Vote shuffling and elections are big business in India.)

There were no exceptional economic hazards at that time, apart from chronic misery and stagnation. There were no lethal threats from the left, right, or center—or from a combined opposition—to the supremacy of Mrs. Gandhi's regime and her big-business supporters. The advance of Jayaprakash Narayan's essentially middle-class protest movement had been erratic; and its populist appeal was still precarious. Industrial disputes—prominently the railway strike of May 1974—had been savagely suppressed. Adversaries on the left—mainly Naxalite groups on the far left, but also some others in or around the CPIM (Communist Party of India, Marxist)—had been persecuted, imprisoned, murdered from 1970 onwards, and were still in a badly weakened, dazed, and splintered state. At the same time, another nominally "left-wing" party, the pro-Moscow CPI (the original Communist Party of India), had remained Mrs. Gandhi's most loyal supporter, despite rebuffs, throughout the emergency period, right up to the election debacle. It would indeed be poetic license to resort to a conventional leftish explanation—as was also quite fashionable—and to claim that the Indian ruling class needed emergency powers at that stage to prevent a mobilization of working-class forces. The job of fighting such scattered forces as existed had been done quite brutally already; and it was actually made more difficult by the wholesale expansion of the emergency offensive which was directed, if not with equal harshness, against the right and center as well as against the left. It is true that by and large different standards were applied: the upper ranks were harassed, while the lower ranks were ferociously persecuted. Few of the elite prisoners were treated with the same kind of barbarism to which anonymous nonconformists, and especially Naxalite prisoners, were subjected. Even so, in terms of the norms of strident inequality in Indian society, there was sacrilege indeed: for once not even the aristocracy and gentry, the gurus, courtiers, and middlemen, the followers of the founding fathers, of the Mahatma and of Tagore, could feel quite safe. The emergency was Mrs. Gandhi's foolproof method for winning the maximum number of enemies all round.

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It was certainly a bizarre operation. And yet when we look more broadly at the historical context of the Congress government in June 1975, and not only at its immediate circumstances at that moment, Emergency Raj falls into place. It is then evident that this regime was in fact part of a secular trend: not a deviation from the Nehru lineage, but on the contrary a logical sequel to it—a package in which the autocratic, arbitrary, ritualistic, anti-realistic elements of that ancestry were combined.

It is impossible to sum up the complex features of the Nehru inheritance, and of its antecedents, in a few sentences, except to remind ourselves of a simple fact: the Indian elites, like those of other ex-colonial countries, have never fully achieved, or even striven for, national independence: they have used a neo-imperialist model for conducting their affairs. But the Indian bourgeoisie—a rich, tight, closely interconnected elite —has been far better endowed than its counterparts in many other ex-colonial countries for the task of adopting that model. In this segmented, hierarchical, caste-ridden society, the bourgeoisie have had the scope and privileges, the historical and cultural sanctions, the resources and artifacts for fashioning their institutions in the glamorized image of their predecessors. (New Delhi itself is an illustration of that continuity: here the new rulers have fitted well into a ready-made habitat of imperial splendor.) Hence independence rule (so-called) has been a special blend of capricious despotism, veering between benevolence and brutality—a curious amalgam of the Mogul emperors' and the Viceroys' courts, assisted by some conventions imported from Westminster, and using a few dusty socialist phrases derived from various sources.

The despotic features of the post-1947 Nehru regime have come to the fore in the recent emergency phase; and so have the associated imitative and formalistic tendencies. It was a regime that promoted the aloofness, the irresponsibility, the self-aggrandizement, and hence the truly formidable capacity for self-delusion of the Indian oligarchy.[2] Independence, Indian Congress-style meant a "me-too," keeping-up-with-the-Joneses attitude—the acquisition of an array of imposing institutions for the sake of appearances, irrespective of their viability and use-

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fullness. Our own government, democracy, armed forces, satellites, television networks; our own brain drain (the export of "know-how," a favorite word, is a matter of great pride); our own "peaceful atomic explosion"; indeed our own imperialism. (Since 1971, the ambitions of Indian imperialism, or sub-imperialism, have become more pronounced.)

It is the obsession with status symbols *per se* which largely explains the hypocritical routine in the conduct of political institutions. For instance: in theory, India has a democratic federal system, in which quite substantial powers are allocated to the 22 states. Each of the states is supposed to have its own elected assembly and government, which in principle could be of a different persuasion than the dominant party at the center. In practice, this has hardly ever been allowed to happen: any state government or assembly that shows dissident tendencies is speedily brought into line, first by promoting "floor crossing," the main political parlor game through which state cabinets are reshuffled; next—if some sparks of independence remain—by the dissolution of the state assembly and government and the imposition of President's Rule, a euphemism for dictatorship by the center.[3]

The arbitrary interference with democratic procedures does not stop at the state level, as outsiders might be inclined to think. It runs through the whole system. On paper, India has democratic local government: major towns and cities are supposed to have their own elected corporations. In practice, at any one time, most of the urban population is disfranchised—without any voice in the conduct of their own affairs. The equivalent of President's Rule is applied to the cities: the elected corporations are removed and "superseded" by administrators appointed by the state. (For example, in March this year seven out of the nine largest cities in India were run in this way.)[4] "Why are the elected corporations so often removed?" The stock answer: "Because they are corrupt." The further question whether it might not then be advisable to change the administrative system in order to avoid the constant see-saw moves (election followed by ejection of councillors) is met with amazement. Surely, it is said, the concept (or rather the fiction) of local democracy must be maintained. Above all, it is the ritual that must be preserved.

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The same fixation on status symbols also accounts for the criminal lopsidedness and wastefulness of so much Indian development during the Nehru-Gandhi reign—usually blatant elitist development, though allegedly designed for the sake of building the "socialist pattern of society." We see lavish new universities, monopolizing extensive tracts of scarce urban land, rather than simple primary schools; costly rocket experiments rather than water taps for the poor; construction of subways, reducing whole streets to rubble, rather than repair of buses; new high-rise offices to house bureaucrats who cannot even manage to provide latrines for the people in the bustees (the shanties) below. And so on. It is all part of the same pretentious story. During the emergency period such enterprises multiplied so rapidly, especially in Delhi, and their fraudulence became so obvious, that eventually the patience of the long-suffering population was wearing thin. (Although Mrs. Gandhi's son, Sanjay, did not start this trend of sponsoring phony prestige projects, he distinguished himself so much in this line that his name became identified with it. One of his brilliant schemes was the erection, with public funds, of a 50-story building to replace a bazaar which he had ordered demolished—a huge building in a crowded corner next to one of the gates leading to Old Delhi. Why a 50-story building for a use which has been and is best accommodated in simple structures at street level, on a site which leaves no space for circulation, in a poor city with a shortage of electricity and frequent power failures? The reply: Mr. Sanjay Gandhi wanted to be able to say that he had built the tallest building in South Asia.)[5]

In the pursuit of status symbols it is the title of acquisition which matters rather than the concrete object itself. The naming of an institution is taken as sufficient evidence of its existence. Thus the pretense that there was a "rule of law," a "system of justice," was kept up—in the face of flagrant misrule, prevalent injustice, police terror and torture, and a shameful penal system, which all existed long before such illegalities were legalized by emergency rule. Outside the prison gates, the iniquities were ignored. For in this neo-imperialist setting, a charade is usually good enough. The word is the thing: the more sonorous the better, irrespective of whether it has any substance.

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As a result, the establishment culture of the Indian post-independence period was and is strangely, indeed alarmingly, nonconcrete and anti-empirical. Despite (or because) the production of bulky reports by commissions, committees, and learned enquiries, despite a vast output of verbiage and newsprint, it is usually so difficult to obtain even elementary facts and figures that their deliberate suppression remains unnoticed for quite some time. Gossip takes the place of political analysis; promises tend to be equated with accomplishments. Hence the solemn repetition of failed party programs, the warming up of manifestos from one election to another; the futile listing of "points," such as Mrs. G.'s meaningless 20-point emergency program, further adorned by her son's five points. Altogether, the climate throughout the post-1947 era was increasingly conducive to double-think, double-speak, double-deal; to evasion, deception, to wholesale unrestrained mendacity. So after 19 months of dictatorial rule and the spectacular election defeat, it was still quite in keeping for the new parliamentary Congress leader to laud Mrs. Gandhi for having "provided the right direction"; and to claim that his party was "a sentinel of democracy." Worse still, perhaps, he and the lady even believed it.

But whether or not the Congress top brass still believe their own commercials, they had certainly come to a point when they had learned to do so, and were acting accordingly. Hence the unmitigated arrogance in the imposition of the emergency; and —no less—in the calling of elections after 19 months of emergency rule. On rational grounds—again in terms of Mrs. G.'s and her government's own interests—this second step seemed to be even more foolhardy and incomprehensible than the first.

Picture the scene: 19 months of terror during which there were wholesale arrests without any redress; all conceivable opponents of the regime were jailed; prison conditions became more savage still; many more "ordinary" prisoners were chained, assaulted, maimed; some vanished, and not even their corpses were found. "Black laws" were passed; men of all ages, young and old, in towns and villages were forcibly sterilized; without warning, strong-arm squads marched into urban bustees, demolished homes, shops, and workshops, pushed the people into trucks and deported them to distant barren sites. At the same

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time, strikes and meetings were banned; both rural laborers and their bosses were antagonized; wages were effectively cut and bonuses were withdrawn. Mrs. Gandhi's regime "treated us as animals."[6] And none of this was allowed to be reported: press censorship and a strict monopoly of official news manufacture were imposed. Then suddenly press censorship is lifted; some semblance of free speech is restored; meetings can again be held; most of the regime's prominent opponents are released from prison so that thy can stand for election against Congress candidates. Did Mrs. Gandhi and her advisers really think that these people—several of whom had been treated viciously—would merely utter a few feeble words of protest? Did they really believe that the emergency excesses (so-called) would remain concealed; and that the election period would be no more than a (to her) harmless interlude during which the press and public would be allowed to "let off steam" before autocracy, as usual, was resumed?

A weird set of assumptions. And yet, apparently, they ruled the day: the Gandhi entourage were hooked by their own lies. Neither the prime minister's astrologers nor her intelligence agents seemed to have been much good. A straightforward technical scrutiny of the previous election results could have shown that the Congress prospects might well be precarious—even if one discounted or underestimated the voters' reactions to the emergency.[7]

Perhaps Mrs. Gandhi was warned. But if so she did not listen. Her apparently quick decision to hold elections in mid-March this year (announced on January 18th) was so astonishing—especially since only quite recently the Lok Sabha's term had been further extended for one year—that it was greeted with widespread skepticism. Could it really be true that elections would be held—genuine elections? Or will there be some reversal before polling day? The disparate opposition groups, until recently gagged, were scattered and unprepared. The campaign had a slow start. It only began to gather momentum in early February after the sensational defection of Jagjivan Ram, one of the principal members of Mrs. Gandhi's cabinet. (He is an experienced old machine politician; and as a member of one of the "scheduled castes"—we have no longer in law, but often still

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in fact, the status of untouchables—the ex-untouchables, he has a large following among the so-called backward classes, especially the 80 million ex-untouchables in India.) Suddenly, the rather brittle Gandhian power structure—without a coherent mass organization, and thus without a feedback of information, manipulated from a tight isolated outpost at the top—began to crumble. A few key defections led to several dozen more; and this in turn produced a rush to join the bandwagon—almost a stampede of Congress deserters. (However, not all the movement was one-way. There were also still a few people who announced that they had crossed the political lines in the opposite direction—not away from, but toward, Congress.) The press certainly let off steam: long-suppressed stories of emergency misdeeds were brought out. It began to look as though there might be a genuine contest after all.

Even so apprehension still remained: what was Mrs. G.'s plan? Why had the election been called? And none of the various rather strained speculations on that topic were convincing. It was said that Mrs. Gandhi had called the election so as not to be left behind Mr. Bhutto, who had set an election date in Pakistan; that it was designed to please President Carter and/or the World Bank; that it was needed to retain the support of the Indian army; or that it was a case of better now than later—on the grounds that Mrs. Gandhi's regime could hardly go on indefinitely, nor could her son be put firmly into the saddle without the election ritual, for which mid-March would be an auspicious date.

The most likely explanation is that several pressures, external and internal, for an at least temporary legitimization of Mrs. Gandhi's regime coincided. And apparently she and her advisers were blind enough to think that they could keep the situation under control. They relied, erroneously as it turned out, on the continued obedience of the bourgeoisie, as shown in the early days of Emergency Raj when influential groups—politicians, civil servants, lawyers, journalists, writers, academics, the very groups whose functions and integrity were nullified by this regime—fell meekly into line. They also relied on the club spirit of the intimate elite groups to which friends and foes alike belonged, and which had previously kept most political rivalries

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at the center within sporty, "gloves-on" limits. (Even during the emergency, the old club rules were still partially observed.) At the same time, the ruling circle discounted the views of the masses, who surely "owed Mrs. Gandhi so much gratitude," and would, it was thought, act again as election fodder and do as they were told. Anyhow, the Gandhi entourage almost certainly had a contingency plan for re-asserting their despotic rule in case Congress failed to get a decisive majority. Hence Mrs. G. insisted on keeping the emergency provisions in reserve throughout the election period: they were only relaxed, not lifted.[8]

But there was one eventuality with which Mrs. Gandhi and her advisers did not reckon—the complete rout of the Congress party in North and Central India, and with it the defeat of the prime minister herself, of her son, and of most of the Congress bosses. In the face of such a debacle, the contingency plan was no longer workable.[9]

The courtiers were stunned. How could this have happened when only yesterday it had still been claimed that "India was Indira and Indira was India"?

How indeed? In essence it was the immense effrontery of such a claim, characteristic of the oligarchy which made it—and the dismissal of reality which it reflected—that brought about the downfall of the ruling clique. One had to see the situation in which they lived—light years removed from ordinary mortals—to understand the scenario of their delusion and alienation. By virtue of their position as the ultimate omnipotent authority at the pinnacle of state power in which the Nehrus (father and daughter) had cast themselves, they had increasingly cut themselves off from any sensible communication with society. They were the lofty personages presiding over an enormous state establishment with two major branches: the political wing in central and state agencies plus a vast, puffed-up, ever-growing, arbitrary bureaucracy, headed by its own elite corps, which is charged with ill-defined, contradictory functions. It is what might be called the equilibrium of corruption—most political bosses seem (or claim) to have files on each other, and are mutually vulnerable—that keeps the political establishment going. It is the inertia induced by its sheer weight which holds

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the bureaucratic machine together. And it also has its own special fixative—a strict hierarchical principle of organization repeated at each level.

As in similar systems of dominance and subordination, this too is like a pyramid of closed doors—with scarce contact or accountability from one stratum to the next. Instead, there is a ritual of bogus communication. The antechamber (or front garden) of a cabinet minister in New Delhi, or for that matter of any dispenser of patronage, provides an illustration. There one usually finds a throng of people—aides, petitioners, hangers-on—who gain merit merely by standing patiently outside the door, within the orbit of an "influential" person. And there one can also see quite often a display of such offensive manners from "masters" to "servants" that it seems like a stylized episode from a nasty feudal tale.

The most eager crowds were in front of Mr. Nehru's house, and later, Mrs. Gandhi's house. Most mornings the court was graciously in session (here the niceties of manners were observed), and audiences were granted to people who had managed to complete the pilgrimage to the prime minister's home in New Delhi. For the huge population of this country, subjected to the relentless cruely of exploitation, poverty, denigration, injustice, this was the place where the iniquities of the system were supposed to be wiped out—by a word or a look. Here the prime minister "met the people," dished out favors, and was called upon to act as arbiter in all sorts of petty disputes. And the great chief also traveled to preside over endless ceremonies: especially in Mrs. Gandhi's reign no factory, public building, university, or conference could be opened without her presence and blessing. The prime minister was everywhere—and ended up by being nowhere.

It was Nehru himself who encouraged the Nehru personality cult, which was started in earnest during the Sino-Indian war of 1962, and was later propagated with great vigor on her own behalf by Mrs. Gandhi and her publicity machine. Her dynastic ambition—to hand over the succession to her son—was a logical corollary (and not a unique one among neocolonial rulers). Sycophancy—even compulsory sycophancy, commanded by emergency edict—became the order of the day.

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Mrs. Gandhi and her circle got used to seeing themselves as objects of veneration. Literally and figuratively, their courtiers prostrated themselves and touched their feet in homage.[10]

So the retreat from reality became accelerated. It is said that in earlier days when Nehru visited Calcutta, the officials used to remove the large shanty colony of post-partition refugees, which was then opposite a major railway station, for a day or two to spare him the sight of such misery. His grandson was more thorough: Sanjay Gandhi evicted the urban poor—altogether, not only for a few days—to deny their very existence.

But there comes a point when reality cannot be shunted off. The election result made that quite clear: at least temporarily it has brought the Indian establishment down to earth. How has this spectacular result come about? What exactly does it mean? Does it reflect the voters' revulsion against specific emergency "excesses"—such as forced sterilization, forced slum clearance, pauperization—or was it a protest against the emergency regime and autocracy generally? These are still the main riddles in this story.

The actual mechanics of the stupendous opposition victory are still obscure. It was generally expected that the Congress party would take a beating—provided that vote-rigging on a large scale could be prevented and the results would not be suppressed.[11] But the extent of the demolition work done on Congress in North and Central India could hardly have been foreseen. By comparison with Congress, the opposition—the newly formed Janata (people's) Front—was initially handicapped by its lack of an established constituency organization and resources. It was a hastily arranged coalition of mutually frigid and competitive political factions, mainly right-wing in terms of conventional party labels, held together merely by their common antagonism to the emergency regime, and also (though not in all cases) by similar experiences of harassment during the period of that regime. Moreover, in terms of its class basis and political ideas, the opposition (now the government) was and is by no means clearly distinguished from Congress, except in one respect—its antagonism to Emergency Raj. Nor could it be said that the mixed batch of opposition leaders and candidates, including a rather high ratio of old gentlemen, was a very at-

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tractive one. (Candidacy was not confined to people with untarnished reputations.) Their main claim for support was derived from the fact that many of them had only recently been released from prison. But would that actually appeal to the mass of voters in rural areas of India who might still be inclined to look for patronage from the bosses rather than for solidarity with the underdogs? The Congress party apparently thought that patronage, or their special concoction "feudal socialism," should be stressed: hence they recruited more princely candidates to their side than in previous elections.[12] But to no avail: perversely the voters preferred the ex-prisoners. (Most prominent Congress leaders, including Mrs. Gandhi and her son, were soundly defeated by ex-prisoners. And the most massive vote of confidence was given to George Fernandes, the railway workers' leader, in a constituency that had never seen him: he was kept in prison on a criminal charge throughout the whole period of the campaign.)

Still, while all the campaign commotion was going on, it often looked like shadowboxing. Every day, there were loudly announced departures from, and also still some arrivals in, the Congress ranks. (Some people even made several trips: they first resigned from Congress, then cancelled their resignations, and then resigned once again.) Politicians and publicists who had only recently acted as staunch defenders of the emergency suddenly became stern critics. Their acrobatic feats were performed with astonishing agility. Overnight the young idol of the media, Sanjay Gandhi, had become the arch-villain—the author of all evil in Indian society. At times, watching the antics of the opposite camps, one could hardly refrain from saying "a plague on both your houses."

Nor were there any other choices. The conventional Communist parties (CPI and CPIM) lost their chance to resolve their bitter feud, to assert their independent existence as a combined left-wing front, and to give a lead to the new radical agitation of the people. The CPI, with quite unpardonable charity, fed the mouth that bit it: the party continued to support Congress, and got thoroughly trounced for its labor. (There are now only three CPI MPs out of a total of 542 in the new Lok Sabha.)[13]

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The CPIM, which decided after all to participate in the election, and to support the Janata Front, played its usual ambivalent role, trying to keep one foot in the camp of the bourgeois state, and another (or rather a bit of another) in the anti-capitalist one. It is an uncomfortable posture (no less so in South Asia than in Western Europe) and it is bound to prove embarrassing for the CPIM before long. (In electoral terms, however, the CPIM has done quite well: it has won 22 seats in the Lok Sabha, 17 of which are from West Bengal.)

Although the rush of converts to the Janata Front was not always an edifying spectacle, it certainly helped the opposition to get money and manpower for their campaign. Presumably, watching this movement, Mrs. Gandhi's big-business sponsors thought it best to lay their bets on both horses. Hence the Janata Front, too, was not bereft of donations. Nor were its old leaders bereft of youthful, disinterested support. In some places (as in Delhi) where there had been a confluence of emergency hardships, the opposition to the regime was conducted with the fervor of a crusade, and this proved to be infectious.

Far less is known, however, about the process through which similar views were filtered to remote rural areas—to the some 600,000 villages of India, which could not all have had the same experiences of the ugly face of Emergency Raj. Nor would many of the rural people, who are living in a state of permanent bondage to atrocious poverty, casteism and petty officialdom (even if they are not formally bonded laborers) be necessarily as struck by the additional elements of coercion introduced by the emergency as the more emancipated, more literate sections of the urban population. Nevertheless, by and large the rural votes too showed a swing away from the customary respect for the great personages of the post-1947 establishment. These votes too seemed to be an assertion of independence.

Can then the verdict of the some 190 million people of India who cast their votes in the March general election be taken as an ideological proclamation—for democracy versus dictatorship? Not exactly. The people had diverse grievances, old and new; and they registered their protests, with varying emphasis, in different ways. (In the election, this was done either by absten-

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tions from voting, or by voting for opposition candidates.) And yet it so happened that all these diverse rumblings coincided, attracted more of the same, and combined in one enormous shout. "Enough is enough," that was the simple message. It is clear, too, that forced sterilization, whether directly experienced or the subject of rumors, was the main single factor that triggered off so much pent-up resentment of frustration and humiliation.[14] (It was widely believed that sterilization was a form of castration, leading to impotence. And because this belief was so strong, sterilization in fact quite often produced this effect.) The arbitrary manner in which boys and men were seized anywhere, while they were working in a field, walking along a road, sitting in a bus, the savage way in which they were "cut," the gratuitous insult to their humanity—all this felt like the tightening grip of tyranny. In many cases, it was the last straw.

No doubt, the election result was a radical vote—or, you could say, a left-wing vote—for a right-wing government. (The new government could be, and has usually been, categorized as right-wing by comparison with the left-wing pretensions, assisted by the CPI, of Mrs. Gandhi's previous Congress government.) Indeed, throughout this story, the labels are confusing. Thus Mrs. Gandhi used to be called a "progressive" by her left-wing friends and a "fascist dictator" by her left-wing enemies. The same people usually referred to the emergency as a "fascist dictatorship." But if these labels were correct, it would become quite impossible to understand the recent events. Who has ever heard of, or could imagine, a fascist dictatorship so obliging as to throw the doors open to its opponents, instead of waiting, fully armed, until the doors are battered in? True, there were dictatorial elements in Congress rule; and there were fascist elements in Mrs. Gandhi's own behavior and in her emergency regime. But that is not the same as saying that it *was* a "fascist dictatorship."

The history of Congress rule has shown once again how risky it is to apply stock labels so freely. Now another such tag is being used: according to one quite common view, "nothing has changed in India." I beg to differ. True again, the new government has essentially the same class alignments and eco-

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nomic interests as the old, and it has similar ideological preferences—except with regard to the autocratic conduct and the denial of civil rights (including trade-union rights) of the previous emergency regime. The new government has promised to establish civil liberties. Its credibility depends on the unequivocal fulfillment of that promise. This requires a re-casting of legal and penal institutions; and certainly, to begin with, the release of all political prisoners, including Naxalite prisoners, without quibbling or delay.[15]

In the longer run, after the post-emergency honeymoon, the new government, based on an improvised, tenuous coalition, might well turn out to be shaky, and in its political habits barely distinguishable from its earlier Congress predecessors. Neither a move further to the right nor a comeback of a re-shuffled Congress regime can be ruled out.

It is more likely, however, that the experience of the emergency and election will lead to a tentative reformist phase (and thus probably to new dissensions among the left). Essentially, the history of Congress rule and the emergency sequel is familiar: it is a special version of the classic story about the power and consequent alienation of the bourgeois state. It is a well-known vicious circle: the exercise of unbridled state power leads to isolation, anti-realism, self-deception, the political illiteracy of the rulers; and this in turn prompts them to arrogate yet further powers to themselves. Therefore in Western countries the bourgeoisie have tried to counteract alienation for their own protection by adopting a reformist system through which the flow of socio-political intelligence can be maintained. In India, in this specific ex-colonial setting, the recognition by the ruling class of the advantages which they could gain from reformist institutions has been much delayed. And matters have been confused because in this setting the notion of disembodied democracy, made up of rhetoric and rituals and divorced from reformism, is one of the cherished neo-imperialist status symbols.

Now there is a slight chance that the concept of democracy in India might become more concrete. For in this last general election the people have thrown out some of the cant, and demolished some of the humbug, in the conduct of the political establishment. Watched by their neighbors in Bangladesh, Pakis-

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tan, Sri Lanka, all of which are also pushed about by arrogant regimes, the Indian people have given a demonstration of their capacity to intimidate their rulers. That is not a trivial fact.

(April 26, 1977)

NOTES

1. It should be emphasized that it was genuinely a minor matter—a technical rather than a substantive transgression—on which Mrs. Gandhi was convicted. By itself, this issue could hardly have done her reputation much lasting harm. According to the highly unreliable Delhi grapevine, however, Mrs. G. was also faced with other complications at that time, arising from her son's questionable business dealings. Hence, so the story goes, the emergency was imposed primarily for the purpose of preventing the exposure of scandals connected with the transactions of Sanjay Gandhi and his helpmates. But in the Delhi milieu, where corruption is alleged to be chronic, where talk of corruption is one of the principal pastimes, where there are frequent threats of exposure which somehow hardly ever materialize, this kind of explanation is not a very plausible one.
2. It has to be remembered that in several ways the post-independence rulers had (and have) even more discretionary power, and are subject to even fewer constraints, than their previous masters. The legal, penal, and police instruments of British state power—from conspiracy trials, the class system in prisons in lathi charges against demonstrators—have been kept almost intact, and have been sharpened since 1947. Moreover, the new rulers have ready-made alibis: when anything is left undone, or goes wrong, they can, and usually do, blame their predecessors. So, for instance, after 30 years of independence, the official excuse for the abysmally slow increase of literacy, and the continued pernicious male-female differential in literacy, is still that this is, of course, the fault of the British raj. (At the time of the last census in 1971, only 45 percent of the total male population over 5 years old, and a mere 21 percent of the total female population over that age, were described as literate, in terms of the minimal census definition of literacy.) And if that kind of alibi begins to be too far-fetched, the blame for mishaps or defects is shifted to some international conspiracy. (In the Nehru-Gandhi era, the official Indian equivalent for "reds under the bed" was usually the CIA, followed by the Pakistanis, the Chinese, or some anonymous international syndicate of evil-doers.)
3. In some cases, there is only a brief period of President's Rule. This happens when the dissolution of state assemblies (or of equivalent bodies in the additional nine union territories, one of which is Delhi) is "arranged" as a prelude to new state elections. At the time of writing, it was expected that the new union government would call such elections—with or without the agreement of the state governments concerned—in nine states where Congress was still in power at the state level, though heavily defeated in the March general election. Subsequently, on April 30th, state elections to be held in June were called in ten states (including one already under President's rule) and in three union territories; later to be followed by two

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further state elections (in Jammu and Kashmir and in Nagaland). The results of the main batch of state elections will have been announced by the time this article is published.

4. There are also many substantial towns and cities which have never known any democratic local government at all. They are the so-called notified areas. Though blessed with the promise that their aspiration for municipal status, duly "notified," will be considered, they continue to wait for decades for its fulfillment.
5. Alas, Sanjay Gandhi had to be disappointed: shortly before the election, when there was a rush to revoke unpopular projects initiated under emergency powers, this plan, too, was scrapped. At that time, it had also already become quite usual — not least among this young man's earlier followers — to attribute every harebrained scheme, every crooked deal, sinister intention, or insolent action, indeed the whole responsibility for the emergency, to him. It was he who became the great anti-hero, and was so displayed in the international press. After the election, it was one of the first actions of the new government to institute an inquiry into his affairs. (Everybody was so pleased. Now Delhi would get a new status symbol: "Our own Watergate"—though the term is quite inappropriate—as good, or rather as bad, as the original Washington show.) In fact, of course, whatever this young man's delinquencies may have been (and they certainly require scrutiny) the inverse personality cult fastened to his name has been (and still is) an absurd and retrograde one. Initially, the tendency was to blame the son for the aberrations of his mother. (One used to hear: "If only we could have her without him." Apparently, the only people who were unaware of this widespread feeling was the Congress high command. In the circumstances the chosen Congress election symbol —a cow with a calf—could hardly have been a less enticing one.) Later on, the guilt of the entire establishment was conveniently transferred to Sanjay Gandhi and to the fellow members of his "gang of four." (Yes, India has one of these, too.) We shall read more about the official inquiries into their doings in the months to come.
6. This phrase, which was often heard, was also used in an article by Hiten Ghosh in *Frontier* (Calcutta), April 2, 1977.
7. Although Congress obtained a two-thirds majority in the Lok Sabha in the last parliamentary elections in 1971, this was achieved with a generally low turnout, and with a relatively small proportion of the popular vote. Throughout India, 55 percent of the electorate voted in 1971; Congress obtained almost 44 percent of all the votes cast, but only the support of 23 percent of the whole electorate, including voters and nonvoters. Hence even a relatively small change in turnout or party allegiance, or a small shift in turnout from one class or group to another, could have been expected to produce a marked change in the parliamentary party representation.
8. It was immediately after her electoral defeat was announced that Mrs. Gandhi revoked the emergency so as to protect her associates who were afraid that the tables would be turned, and that they themselves would be arrested under the emergency provisions.
9. In the 1971 general election, Congress had won 352 seats in the Lok Sabha, which then had a total of 518 members. In the March 1977 election, Congress won a mere 153 seats out of a total of 542 in the

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new Lok Sabha. Moreover, the majority of these seats (92) were in four southern states to which only 129 (less than one in four) of the Lok Sabha seats are allocated. Congress was virtually wiped out in the large northern and central states which were its former strongholds, and from which the bulk of the Lok Sabha MPs are drawn.

10. The habit of prostrating oneself as a mark of respect, and of touching the feet of a person—usually an older person, a relative, a teacher, a person of authority—is common in northern and central parts of India. And not only the gesture itself, but also the attitude of submission and reverence which it represents, had become quite usual in the audience chambers of politicians in New Delhi—so much so that it was taken for granted. After the elections, for the first time in many years, there was a strong reaction against it. At the great victory rally of the Janata Front in Delhi (on March 24th) one of its elder statesmen, Acharya Kripalani (now in his nineties) made an emphatic plea: "Never touch the feet of a politician. We are made of clay. . . ."
11. Both these provisos had to be taken very seriously throughout the campaign—though the enormous scale of the electoral procedure in India would make a really decisive, widespread vote-rigging campaign rather difficult. It could only be carried out with the connivance of the local bureaucracy, who did not generally seem inclined to offer such co-operation in the March elections. Even so, the election was obstructed in some places. Some vote-rigging, as well as strong-arm interference at polling booths, occurred in several places, especially in West Bengal constituencies which used to support CPIM candidates. On the other hand, one previously successful method of securing Congress support—vote-buying—failed miserably. It seems that people very sensibly took the gifts offered (money, clothes, easy bank loans) and then proceeded to vote for the opposition candidate. No obedience there. It is nice to know that so many people will have had a good meal courtesy of Congress before its departure.
12. According to *The Statesman* (Calcutta), which discussed "feudal socialism" in an editorial on March 16th, "the phrase has been employed in Orissa, and quite justifiably so, since among the most loyal supporters of Mrs. Gandhi's egalitarian ethic are such truly plebeian personalities as . . . an assortment of princes." (However, their glamor had faded: they were defeated.) *The Statesman* went on to report the Congress president's explanation of his party's new alliances with the Maharajas, given on the grounds that there had been "a qualitative change in the princes."
13. Subsequently, the CPI explained that it had "overestimated . . . the progressive potentiality of the national bourgeoisie and of its representatives in the Congress headed by Indira Gandhi." Why were they hoodwinked? At a CPI council session in West Bengal in mid-April, speakers were reported to have said "that the CIA had worked in India through Mr. Sanjay Gandhi. They suspected that Mrs. Gandhi, who had pursued pro-monopolist and anti-working class policies during the later phases of the emergency, could not have been unaware of the CIA's role." (*The Statesman Weekly,* April 23, 1977.) So, in retrospect, there was still, in the official view of the CPI, nothing wrong with the early phase of the emergency. However, contrary views

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are nowadays also expressed more strongly by the CPI rank and file. One hears calls for a "left-democratic front," as well as demands that the CPI should dissociate itself from Congress, which is regarded by these critics as a party dominated by the "worst section of the bourgeoisie."

14. The importance of forced sterilization as a trigger factor is also indicated by the fact that Congress results were much better in the southern states, in which such practices were comparatively rare, than they were in northern and central India where the "excesses" were widespread.
15. In the pre-emergency period, despite the flagrant denial of civil liberties, the law's delay, the suppression of political nonconformists, despite the harassment of "weaker sections," and gruesome examples of atrocities against ex-untouchables—despite all that, there was a great silence on this whole subject. Hardly any of the "progressive" elements of the bourgeoisie, or of the press, wherever they were located on the political map, could be bothered to take much interest in it. (It has only now, belatedly, become a trendy topic.) And in the past it was the persecution of one set of people in particular, the Naxalites, that was generally ignored. Practically all political parties and groups from right to left (including the CPIM) were hostile or, at best, indifferent to the fate of Naxalite prisoners, many of whom have been held, literally chained, in prison for up to seven or eight years, with or without the pretext of charges, and without having been brought to trial. The usual view was that Naxalites could rot in prison: they did not deserve to be treated in accordance with the due process of law because they themselves were "violent" people, set against the law. The emergency brought about a change of mind, at least superficially, in this respect: it began to be realized that the law was, so to speak, not divisible after all. As a result, most political groups—including the CPI and CPIM who had been (and who largely still are) bitter foes of the Naxalites—now demand their release from prison. And indeed action in this matter, which has so far been patchy, needs to be speeded up: it will be a key index in assessing the performance of the new regime.

A large part of this nation's wheat crops contains the smut (a plant disease). Most millers remove the diseased grain with special processing machinery. But the worst affected wheat is usually sold to foreign buyers that are too hungry or don't have any sizable wheat crops that could be infected.

—*New York Times,* January 28, 1975

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THE EAST EUROPEAN SOCIAL FORMATION

BY ROSS GANDY

An observer of the social system in Eastern Europe writes in MONTHLY REVIEW (April 1975, p. 35) that it is "a society of a new type which dialectically negates capitalism and any other socio-structural mechanism regulated by the institution of private property in the means of production. This society is what Marx would have called a new social formation." In the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, explains the observer, there is neither capitalist nor communist society, nor a transitional form between them. Marx would say there is *a new social formation.*

This sounds as if he's on the right track; Marx probably would say that. Let's look a little more closely at his view of social formations. In the tangle of nations and cultures running through world history, how does he make out the formations and tell what kind they are?

"Assuming some form of social production to exist," says Marx in his scholarly manner, "a distinction can always be made between that portion of labor whose product is directly consumed individually by the producers and their families and

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that portion of labor which is invariably surplus labor, whose product serves constantly to satisfy the general social needs, no matter how this surplus product may be divided, and no matter who may function as representative of these social needs."[1]* Let's pick out some of the ideas stuffed into that sentence. In any civilization the people who labor in fields, mines, and workshops produce many things. Some of these things go to the laborers to fill their stomachs, put clothes on their backs, and provide fun on occasional holidays. But a lot of things are left over, and Marx calls this the surplus product. The surplus product is the difference between what a society produces and what the productive laborers consume; the surplus is what is left over after the workers have been fed. And who disposes of the surplus? Why the ruling class of course.

So far this applies to any social formation in history, from the priestly theocracy of ancient Egypt to the bureaucratic "socialism" of the Incas, from the medieval kingdoms of thirteenth century Europe to the slave society of the old American South. What marks off one formation from another? *"The specific economic form in which unpaid surplus labor is pumped out of direct producers determines* the relationship of rulers and ruled, as it grows directly out of production itself," Marx tells us. "Upon this, however, is founded the entire formation of the economic community which grows up out of the production relations themselves."[2] Marx's idea is simple: what separates one social formation from another is the form in which the surplus is pumped out of the productive laborers. In old Asia's mode of production the surplus was pumped out of the laborers as taxes in kind for a royal bureaucracy; in the slave mode of production it took the form of forced service for the Roman masters; in the feudal mode it was a monthly rent of meat, eggs, milk for the lord, and work in his fields; in the capitalist mode it is profit, interest, and dividends. To tell one formation from another we must ask: What kind of suction pump is used on the working people? Are armed tax collectors knocking on doors? Or do we hear the sound of the whip and the groans rising from a gang of slaves? Are the workers

* Notes will be found at the end of the article.

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tied to the soil, like the trees and the cows, tilling it for themselves *and a band of knights?* Or does a group of people clip coupons and stash away the cash? These are different ways of pumping out surplus labor from people like you and me. Marx repeats it often: "The essential difference between the various economic social formations, between, for instance, a society based on slave labor, and one based on wage labor, lies only in the mode in which this surplus labor is in each case extracted from the actual producer, the laborer."[3]

Today in the post-capitalist societies of the East there is a ruling class of bureaucrats. How do they pump the surplus out of the productive workers? Through huge taxes? Through forced labor? Through feudal rents? Through profit, interest, and dividends? No, not through any of these. In the Soviet orbit much of the surplus takes the form of higher salaries for bureaucrats: factory managers, state officials, party men, military officers, university professors, scientific workers. This way of sucking up surplus is rare in past history and marks the rise of *a new social formation.*

The high salary that goes with the bureaucrat's office is more than money. If you visit the luxury apartment of a well-heeled Russian he may drive up in his chauffeured limousine, pour you a drink of French cognac obtained cheaply from his commissary, and show you photos of his dacha on the Black Sea. Looks like he's piling up riches to leave to his kids, doesn't it? Not so: apartment, commissary, car, chauffeur, and dacha come with the bureaucrat's post; and demotion or death take them away. What he can give the kids is an education. Once he's used "pull" to get them into a top university or leading institute they can work toward state dachas themselves. (Of course there may be *illegal* ways of handing on these things to children.)

In Eastern societies there are no owners passing on factories to children as private property; the planners have suppressed a good deal of the market; and the ruling class never sucks the surplus from workers through profit, interest, dividends, and rent. A solid chunk of the surplus goes as higher salaries for bureaucrats, and there is probably a larger proportion of rulers to ruled than in the United States. Compare

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the army of officials in Russia to the handful of corporate rich in America. Less than 1 percent of America's families owns 70 percent of the industrial assets. You know the family names: the Duponts, the Gettys, the Kennedys, the Mellons, the Astors, the Rockefellers. Of course the corporate rich are not the only ones who soak up surplus; there are countless local bankers, lawyers, contractors, and real-estate owners; huge sums are wasted on the business sales effort and the military. But an impressive slice of the surplus goes to the corporate rich.

In the United States to become a lord of the earth it's enough to be born a Dupont, Ford, or Rockefeller. So if the Buddhists turn out to be right about your next life, then try for reincarnation in America—you might land in a Rockefeller womb. Don't choose rebirth into Soviet society. A father like Brezhnev can only provide a running start in life: you must pant through a long education, sweat through on-the-job training, and climb the bureaucratic ladder to higher offices.

In the East you have to put in years of brain work to reach the top. There's exploitation in the Eastern social systems, yes, but don't you find more "justice" in Moscow than in New York? Though Marx would be disappointed by the outcome of the Russian Revolution, he would call it an anti-capitalist social formation—something new and unforeseen.

In New York or Mexico City there are not enough hospitals for the sick; people give up looking for jobs that don't exist; and the polluted air makes you cough. Under Russia's bureaucratic socialism there is more "justice" for the average man. "The cities are immaculate," writes a *Time* reporter (March 8, 1976). "There is genuine, if belated, concern about the environment. Every city has large green areas and parks. Industrial polluters now receive stiff penalties if they persist. Moscow, which has banished more than 300 factories in the past ten years, has remarkably clean air for a big city, and is now experimenting with a fleet of trucks powered by natural gas as a possible way of cutting down on automotive pollution." *Society guarantees you an apartment and a job.* Medicine, though of doubtful quality, is free; and doctors are plentiful. The literacy rate is higher than in the United States, and each year more books are published and read in the USSR than

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anywhere else. In a brief visit to Moscow I noticed that everyone had his or her nose in a book: the elevator operator, the sales clerk, and the cabbie who parked to read. True, the censor's hand weighs heavily, but there's some informal self-censorship here at home: ask the editors of this magazine, authors read around the world, how many of their works American booksellers will place on their trade shelves for you to examine.

Though the Russian bureaucrats take the luxuries, for the masses they bring home the bacon. They spend billions on public housing and subways, and their planning centers vaccinate the economy against plagues that ravage the West—stagflation, big public debts, and millions of people out of work. The Soviets—now producing more steel, tractors, and oil than any nation on earth—have come a long way fast, though in this century wars twice destroyed their economy and they started around 1920 with a backward peasant country.

I live in a country containing a lot of peasants: Mexico. One out of three Mexicans can't sign his or her name, and others barely read. Forty percent of the labor force is unemployed. That's right; if you count only men in the labor force, almost half are forever without jobs.[4] Their one-room shacks contain five people with no light or water. More than half the nation lacks medicine: that means you die of curable diseases like appendicitis or amoebic dysentery. Slum children have white spots on their skin; two-thirds of the people suffer malnutrition. The exploding population makes these social conditions grow *worse*. Mexico City, filling up with factories and cars, is a sea of smog, tenements, and shantytowns north of fashionable bourgeois *colonias*. For forty years this backward country has been "developing" with capitalist methods.

The bureaucratic systems of the East look pretty good from the standpoint of the growing horror in the Third World. Just compare Mexico to Rumania, or compare India to the USSR and you will see what I mean. If you remind me that in bureaucratic socialism there is little freedom, equality, or meaningful work, I remind you that much of mankind can't read, and worries more about learning the ABCs than removing the university censor and that the swelling flood of Third

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World unemployed would settle for whatever job—without a care for its meaning. No wonder Russia looks decent to half of humankind.

The Soviet Union is not a revolutionary society. It sometimes betrays revolutions (Spain 1938, Greece 1947, Cambodia 1970); it sometimes supports them: what would have happened to the revolutions in Cuba, Vietnam, and Angola without Soviet aid? On balance the Soviet record of support for revolutions is poor, but it is no worse than China's. The Soviet leaders, guiding a bureaucratic anti-capitalist society, occasionally see their interests served by encouragement of socialist revolution in the Third World.

Revolutionaries must take a new look, a hard look at bureaucratic socialism, and think out what it is and what it is not, because it's going to be around for a while. It is probably not a transitional society, but a new social formation. It is certainly not at present state capitalism, but a planned society run by a bureaucratic class. It is better than capitalism, because it meets the basic needs of the masses and allows backward nations to develop rapidly. Yet it is an unjust society, and the class struggle between workers and bureaucrats flares up in 17th-of-June riots (East Germany), strike waves (Poland), urban insurrections (Hungary), and perhaps even in cultural revolutions (Albania). It is a society that belongs to the "prehistory of humanity," to use Marx's phrase, and it will some day pass from the world stage as capitalism is now doing. The struggle for communism—for freedom, equality, and meaningful work—will occupy more and more people as we move into the next century.

This delay is not easy to face: you and I will not live to see communism, nor will our children. Ten years ago on the New Left we thought that a communist world revolution was rising around us; and when this turned out to be an illusion, a lot of people quit. But if you are reading this you have stayed with us; you know that revolutionary currents ebb and flow. Marx often saw the revolution retreat, and he watched his comrades endure periods of reaction: "Up to now I have found that all really sound natures," he wrote to his friend J. F. Becker on September 4, 1860, "once they have taken the revo-

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lutionary road, continuously suck new strength from defeat itself and become ever more determined, the longer they swim in the river of history." Under capitalism we face this choice: submission or struggle. "What is your idea of happiness?" Marx was asked. "To fight."

NOTES

1. *Capital,* vol. 3 (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1962), p. 855.
2. *Ibid.,* p. 772. Emphasis added.
3. *Capital,* vol. 1, p. 217. I have slightly changed the translation to bring out the meaning of *ökonomischen Gesellschaftsformationen.*
4. Wolf Grabendorf, a German sociologist, says that it *is* half. See his *Lateinamerika: wohin?* (Munich, 1974), p. 92.

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BOOKS

DARE TO THINK, DARE TO SPEAK

By Jean-Marc Piotte

In *Lénine, les Paysans, Taylor* (Paris: Seuil, 1976) Robert Linhart invites us to a re-reading of Lenin which focuses on the relationship between socialist states on the one hand and the working class and the peasantry on the other. In defining the scope of his work Linhart states:

> Here I will not go beyond two general problems which appear to me to be essential in that they touch the two basic classes of direct producers and have, more than other questions (sometimes more spectacular ones), contributed to give the Soviet Union its particular appearance and its underlying structure:
>
> —agrarian policy (that is, the relationship with the peasantry);
>
> —policy concerning the organization of industrial work (that is, one of the essential aspects of the relationship with the working class).
>
> We will see, moreover, that the two overlap closely on many points. (P. 19)

Linhart's book does not contradict the modest and circumscribed analysis of my *Sur Lénine* (Montréal: Parti Pris, 1972) but rather gives it a new theoretical dimension which was dramatically lacking.

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The Peasantry

The revolt of the peasants (who solved the agrarian question by themselves) was supported by the Bolsheviks. It was this revolt that gave the initial spark to the October Revolution. But very rapidly, in the spring of 1918, the disastrous effects of a war, led by the former dominant classes and supported by the imperialist countries in their bid to regain state power, posed the crucial problem of the requisitioning of wheat to feed not only the soldiers of the new Red Army but also the starving populations of the towns. This war for wheat (bread was the basic staple of the Russians, as rice was in Asia) "was to reoccur, in one form or another, nearly every year until 1929 and even much later—under new conditions." (p. 39)

Lenin supported both persuasion and coercion of the peasantry. When in 1929 Stalin imposed the agrarian revolution on the peasants, using military force, he placed himself to a certain extent in the Leninist tradition. This repression of the peasant class, according to Linhart, was rooted in the intellectual petty bourgeoisie which had retained an old anti-peasant hatred. The struggle which had to be waged by the Marxists against populism had not helped the intellectual petty bourgeoisie take a hard look at its own prejudices.

But the originality of Linhart's effort* is especially apparent in his manner of approaching Lenin, that is, by looking at Lenin's relationship to the working class, focusing on the question of Taylorism.

The Working Class

Very early, Lenin perceived in Taylorism a technical aspect (a rationalization of industrial work) which concerns the exploitation of the working class by capitalism. He seeks to differentiate these two functions in order to apply the "rational kernel" of the Taylorist conception to the Soviet economy as a whole.

The main reason for introducing Taylorism in the factories was the pressing need to increase productivity, that is, to develop the forces of production. As a matter of fact, the development of the forces of production is, for Lenin, the condition *sine qua non* required to establish communism: the disappearance of social

* Cited in Jacques Rancière, *La Leçon d'Althusser* (Paris: Collection Idées) p. 91. This is an absolutely essential book for all those who have learned from that great Marxist theoretician that was Althusser.

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classes, of the division between city and country, of the separation between manual and intellectual work, and of the state. What we can thus call—in the light of practical politics in China—Lenin's "economism," is however limited by a series of immediate political objectives which also structured the introduction of Taylorism in Russia.

The work day must be shortened: Lenin thus assumes one of the fundamental demands of the working class. But this goal, which is implemented thanks to the development of productivity brought about by the application of Taylorism, also gives to the working masses the time needed to administer the affairs of state (see Lenin's *State and Revolution*).

The effect of the Taylorization of work—that is, its reduction to simple, mechanical, and indefinitely repeatable actions—is minimized not only because the worker is now able to spend some of his increased free time administering the state, but also because he now has to exercise control over the whole management of the enterprise. On the one hand, then, there is Taylorized manual work, and on the other there are intellectual tasks outside the normal day's work: state and enterprise management. What happened actually is that even while Lenin was still alive, very soon after the Revolution, manual work was Taylorized and the intellectual work of political, economic, and cultural administration was monopolized by others who were not workers.

Taylorism's penetration of the USSR was easy, especially since the composition of the working class facilitated it. In the United States as in Europe, the fight against Taylorism was both a defense of the worker's knowledge and a corporatist defense reflex of the most privileged faction of the working class (represented in North America by the AFL) against the emergence of an unskilled proletariat which did not have a "capital" of technical expertise (represented by the CIO). In the USSR there was, for various historical reasons, no strong sector of the working class resting on a system of trade apprenticeship. Consequently there was no expropriation of the workers' expertise. The imperialist industrialization of Russia by European capital created, with huge factories, an unskilled proletariat which, right from the beginning, experienced the application of Taylorism and Fordism. In a situation where the level of productivity was low, and given the unskilled character of the proletariat, Lenin adopted Taylorism as the only viable alternative, as the only way to create the economic basis of the desired collective appropriation of the means of production.

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The working class, having completely disappeared into the state apparatus, could not administer the factories and the state. Lenin gave the concrete answer to the question that puzzled Marx in the aftermath of the defeat of the Paris Commune: the seizure of state power required "the physical transformation of the revolutionary proletariat into an apparatus of state power—the army, the administration, the police, propaganda." (p. 155) The armed struggle waged by the proletariat to keep its new state power was nothing more, according to Linhart, than the history of this fantastic transformation. But the proletariat which dissolved itself in the state apparatus disappeared socially as a proletariat. It was replaced in the factories by elements of the urban petty bourgeoisie who had lost their social position in the revolutionary process, or by the rural petty bourgeoisie (the peasants), which Lenin, the Bolsheviks, and the new power did not trust because they did not have the experience and the class consciousness of a seasoned working class. This new working class, characterized by the heterogeneity of its class origins and of its actual class positions, had to be controlled politically, and it also had to be Taylorized on the economic level.

We find in the writings of Marx two different views on work: one which aims at diminishing manual labor, considered to be essentially dehumanizing, and consequently strives to attain a type of communism which would give to everybody the possibility of combining intellectual and manual work; the other (which the Althusserians would call the young Marx's view) is one which aims at making manual work "creative." Lenin chose the former of these two views, and the application of Taylorism had as its contradictory objective to try to limit the amount of necessarily dehumanizing work that people have to do.

Toward the end of his life, Lenin struggled against bureaucratism, which he perceived as a growing danger. But he did not see that Taylorism is the introduction of bureaucratization in the work process itself, through "the proliferation of the functions of control and recording of every act, the creation of various tasks for accountants, employees, time-keepers, etc." (p. 114) These developments contained "in the bud," according to Linhart, "a new aristocracy originating from the ex-proletariat and the possibility of repressive practices towards the working masses." (p. 168)

What is this new aristocracy? Linhart does not enlighten us on this question. It is as if, coming face to face with the new paths of analysis and research that he opens up, he stiffens up, is

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seized by vertigo, and deeply frightened. This most probably explains the absence of a section which would *conclude* the two parts of his book.

A Few Hypotheses

Everything gravitates around this very small question: what is the nature of the USSR?

For China and its orthodox followers,* it all started with Khrushchev.** Stalin, according to this view, committed a few errors—of which they speak very little—but his political line was fundamentally correct. After Stalin's death (1953) there was a *coup d'état* which replaced the proletariat by the bourgeoisie. The fact that this mysterious violent overthrow of one class by another rests on practically no known events does not seem to overly disturb our Maoists. However, a revolution—that is, the violent overthrow of one class by another—is so easy to recognize that it is usually not necessary to prove that it has taken place. All that needs to be done, *on the basis of known facts,* is to analyze and explain it.

Linhart's views differ from those of Bettelheim—in his *Class Struggles in the USSR, 1917-1923* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1976)—on the following points: (1) Linhart says that the origins of the loss of power by the proletariat date back to Lenin's time. (2) He does not define the nature of the "new aristocracy," leaving the door open for the Chinese hypothesis (a bourgeoisie), the Trotskyist hypothesis (a bureaucratic caste), or some other hypothesis. (3) Like Bettelheim, he contrasts the Stalinist concept of Leninism with the living thought of Lenin: "It is a living thought, and consequently a necessarily unfinished thought that death brutally interrupted in 1924: The Leninism which was born then is not the prolongation of the thought of Lenin." (p. 171) But Linhart, unlike Bettelheim, does not contrast the Stalinist period with the Leninist period as two diametrically opposed periods as far as social classes are concerned.

This "left" view which Linhart upholds is evidently influenced by the revolutionary process in China and by the Cultural Revolution. However, it seems to me that sometimes Linhart's

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* Martin Nicolaus's book, *Restoration of Capitalism in the USSR* (Chicago: Liberator Press, 1975) is a deplorable example of that orthodoxy.

** Some distinguish between the official Chinese line and a non-official one in which China would be more critical toward Stalin. Here, however, I prefer to take China's political line at its face value.

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views are somewhat idealized—for example on the Chinese perspective on the question of the division between intellectual and manual worker. (This idealist view is perhaps the peculiar way that the left fraction of the intellectual bourgeoisie in industrialized capitalist societies perceives China.)

Whatever the case may be, Linhart's approach is correct: we must analyze the USSR in the light of the Chinese experience. This hypothesis seems more fruitful than the Trotskyist hypothesis (the bureaucratic caste) which over the last thirty years has produced only repetitive research results amounting to very little. And it is clearly superior to the Khrushchevian hypothesis which blames everything on Stalin, accusing him of having instituted the cult of his own personality, a hypothesis which is defended by those who are highly influenced by the USSR. This hypothesis, which reduces a historical phenomenon to individual idiosyncrasies, has understandably never given rise to any interesting research.

But what in effect is the class nature of this "new aristocracy"? On this issue, Bettelheim remains faithful to the Chinese positions: the bourgeoisie has regained power in the USSR, and this society has now become once again a capitalist society. But this interpretation comes up against a major problem. Marx showed us that the capitalist mode of production is based on the private property of the means of production. But in the USSR the ruling class can only *collectively* appropriate for itself the means of production. This nonnegligible conceptual contradiction leads the partisans of the thesis of a return to capitalism into rather bizarre theoretical contortions. Could it not be that we are looking at a new reality (class society in the USSR) in the light of our knowledge of an old reality (the capitalist mode of production)? The history of science can be read as the continual limiting and transcending of this type of already dated knowledge.

Robert Linhart, like Paul M. Sweezy in MONTHLY REVIEW (March 1976), does not pass judgment on the nature of the class society which has developed in the USSR. This leaves open the possibility that the Soviet Union represents a new mode of production called upon to replace the capitalist mode of production, just as the latter had replaced the feudal mode of production. It could be superior inasmuch as it can assure a greater development of the forces of production while guaranteeing greater social stability; this is due mainly to the fact that it can provide the popular masses with certain social benefits: very low unemployment; control over the processes of inflation or recession; a system of education which is integrated and free at all levels; free health

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care; a planned system of cultural recreation and sports; child-care centers and kindergartens. The revisionism of most Communist parties, then, is understandable: if it is not the proletariat which must replace the bourgeoisie but a new exploiting class, the transition from the capitalist to the new mode of production can be implemented in stages, through evolution, and not necessarily by a radical break, through a revolution.

China tells us that this hypothesis is erroneous, that no important utopian dimension exists in Marxism and Leninism. And the young revolutionaries in Quebec and in Canada are undoubtedly right: China represents the only concrete hope that the type of society that exists in the USSR need not be the inevitable outcome of the destruction of the capitalist mode of production, that it is possible to implement socialism as a transition stage towards communism. China leads the revolutionary struggle. But China has not resolved in a definitive way the agrarian question (the land does not belong to the people as a whole). And above all, China has not put forth a definitive answer to the fundamental problem of the division between those who possess knowledge (the intellectuals, in Gramsci's sense of the word) and the rest of the population.

What is the USSR? The answer to this very small question determines what happens to Marxist theory, to the analysis of the international situation, and to the direction of our struggle.

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(*Continued from inside front cover*)

to Bogotá before being forced to discontinue for financial reasons. The chances of survival of the new venture will be greatly, and perhaps decisively, influenced by its ability to build up a sizable circulation in the Americas, South and North. We have arranged to import 500 copies of Vol. 1, No. 2 for distribution to individuals and bookstores in the United States and Puerto Rico. The price of individual copies will be $1.25. Bookstores or study groups ordering five or more copies on a continuing basis will get a 25 percent discount. (For a limited time only bookstores and study groups may send for a free examination copy.) MR readers in Latin American countries wishing to subscribe to RM/MR should do so directly. The address is Apartado de Correos 2760, Barcelona, Spain, and the annual subscription rate outside Spain is 1,200 pesetas.

For us the visit to Spain was both interesting and educational. We were very much moved by the warm reception by the students and professors who attended the symposium sessions and lectures. Also impressive was the evident amount of study of Marxist works, including widespread knowledge and interest in Spanish editions of books by MR authors. We hope that what we learned there will enable us to participate more fruitfully in the discussion of the "new reformism" which has been running in MR during the past year and will doubtless be continued.

The article by Chomsky and Herman in this issue focuses on the most glaring, indeed most monstrous, contradiction in the whole area of present-day international relations—that the United States, while loudly lecturing all and sundry on the sacredness of human rights, at the very same time establishes, sustains, and keeps alive the very regimes which are the most brutal and vicious suppressors of human rights. It is a tribute to the brainwashing power of the U.S. ruling class and its ideological apparatuses that most people in this country are not even aware of the existence of this contradiction, while those who do understand it are often so disgusted that they fail to see that, like most contradictions, it has a positive aspect. Chomsky and Herman do not fall into this error, wisely pointing out at the end of their article that the Carter administration, by so insistently proclaiming its devotion to human rights, is in effect inviting pressure from its critics and opponents to act as well as preach. The importance of stressing (and acting on) this aspect was brought home to us when we recently received from friends in Latin America a copy of a letter from a political prisoner smuggled out of one of the continent's crowded jails. Referring to the isolation from events in the outside world inflicted on prisoners, the writer says: "How curious that we are so preoccupied with whether or not the United States will promote human rights, as though it were a matter of the utmost importance for us prisoners! This curiousness stems from the history and the audacity of North American policy. I would like very much to know how you see this problem." It is necessary to criticize the Carter policies with all the severity they deserve, as Chomsky and Herman do, but let us at the same time never stop challenging Washington to back up its words with deeds. No aid of any kind to the destroyers of human rights!

To clear up a regrettable misunderstanding: "Said Salum," author of "The Tanzanian State—A Critique" in the January 1977 issue of MR, is a pseudonym.

The May issue of MR was very late and did not reach many readers until after the June issue. This was not the fault of the editors or printer but rather was due to a long and unreported delay at the mailing house. We have taken steps to see that this unnecessary and unfortunate breakdown is not repeated.

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